

THE HISTORY OF TRADE-UNION  
ORGANIZATION IN CANADA

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# THE HISTORY OF TRADE-UNION ORGANIZATION IN CANADA

BY

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To  
B. v. K.



## PREFACE

The aim of this work is to give a general survey of trade-union organization in Canada from its beginnings down to the present. The manner of approach is to follow as far as possible the chronological order of events, and the method is mainly descriptive. With this conception of the task I have sought to present the facts clearly and without prejudice, introducing only a limited amount of interpretation. If inaccuracies have crept in they may in some measure be excused by the pioneer nature of much of the work, the biased quality of considerable of the source material, and, finally, the necessity of carrying through a large part of the investigation away from Canada and consequently being compelled to rely upon correspondence to supplement the various records available. Above all I have sought throughout, while presenting the development and activities of each movement in turn, to deal with it sympathetically and to put it forward as far as practicable in the spirit of its promoters rather than from the angle of the sophisticated critic. With this in mind I have followed the practice, even at the risk of sacrificing smoothness of style, of retaining considerable of the exact phraseology of the original statements.

A brief word will be in order concerning the matter of proportions. From the point of view of years covered, the space devoted to the nineteenth century may appear inexcusably brief by comparison with that which follows. The explanation lies in two factors: first, the comparative unimportance of the labor movement in the earlier period, and second, the paucity of available descriptive material. As brought out in more detail in the text, the unions prior to 1870 operated largely in isolation and received very little attention from the public. The historian is

limited during this period to the records of one or two unions that have fortunately been preserved, and to such reviews as were written at a later period and published in Labor Day souvenirs and in government reports. Considerable material is available dealing with the early seventies, but following this the record is scanty down to 1900. With that date begins the publication of the *Labor Gazette* by the Dominion department of labor, and the simultaneous unbroken record of the conventions of the Canada Trades and Labor Congress. The account of the Provincial Workmen's Association, extended out of proportion to its numerical importance, is offered in the dimensions herein given owing to its accomplishments over a long period of years and to its unrivaled position as the outstanding example of pure Canadian unionism. Likewise the Catholic Movement of Quebec, because on account of its principles and policies it stands unique among labor movements on the North American continent, has been given more attention than that accorded a similar membership within the internationals.

By way of explanation of any omission of minor recent happenings from the story and the predominance of statistics for the year 1923, I wish to state that the first account, which was prepared as a Doctor's dissertation, was completed in 1924 and proposed to cover the history only to the beginning of that year. Subsequently, during the summer of 1926, further material was added and revision made of those parts affected in any considerable degree by events occurring in the interim.

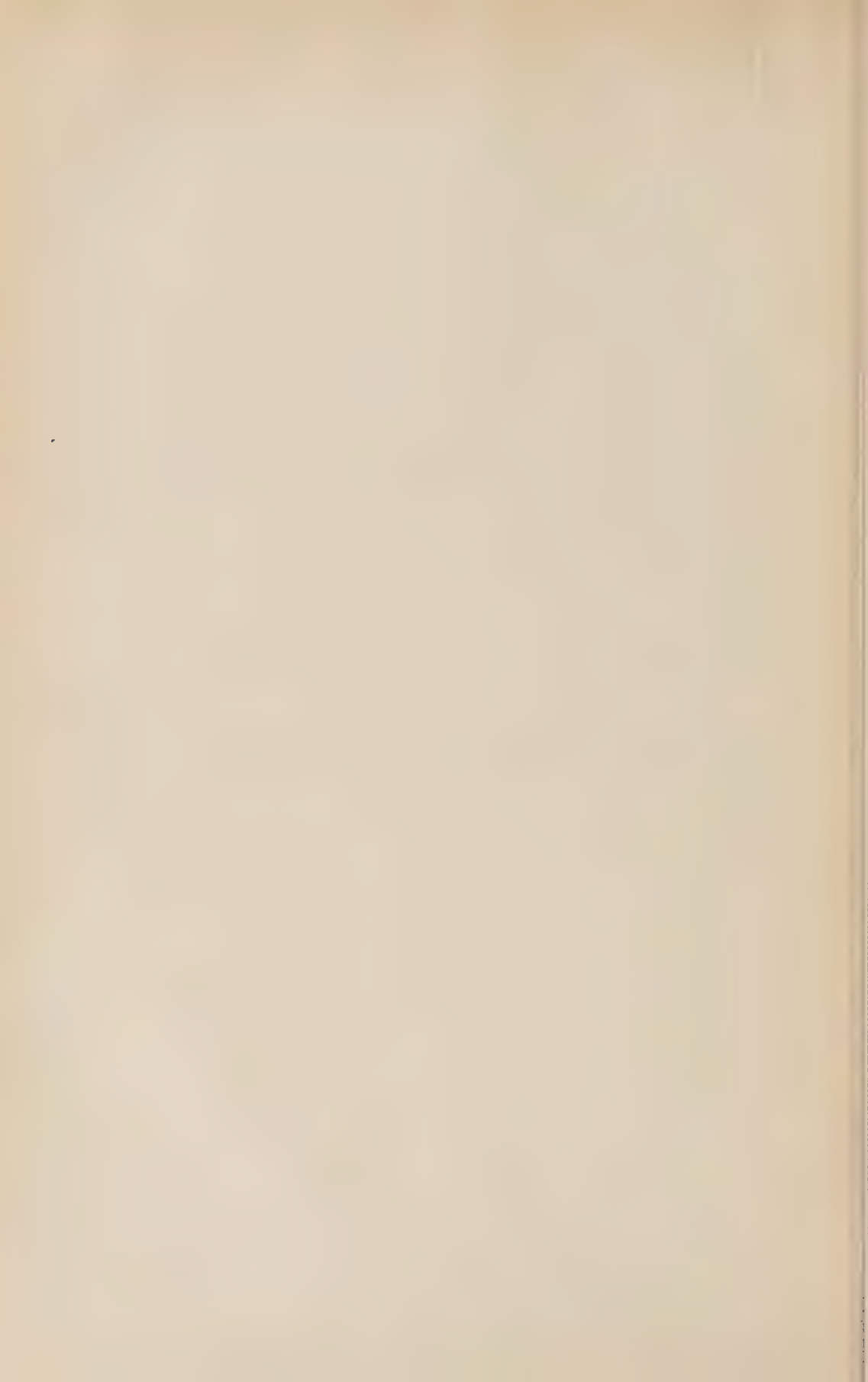
I wish at this time to express my appreciation of those who have assisted me either by direct information or in the collection of the materials upon which I have depended, and especially to Messrs. Tom Moore and George Dower, of the Canada Trades and Labor Congress, R. B. Russell, of the One Big Union, G. Tremblay and A. Morin, of the National Catholic Movement, and to various members of the department of labor at Ottawa—notably Miss Margaret McIntosh, its competent librarian. I

am under great obligation to Rev. W. S. Ryder for furnishing me with the results of his own painstaking study of the Winnipeg strike of 1919, and to Professor J. Viner and Mr. Bryce M. Stewart, who kindly read the entire manuscript and offered many important suggestions. To Dr. H. A. Millis, of the University of Chicago, under whose supervision the whole work has been prepared, and to Professor L. C. Marshall, of the same institution, I am indebted for much valuable criticism, inspiration, and advice.



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## CHAPTER I

### EARLY LABOR MOVEMENT, 1825-80

#### I. OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND AND CONDITION OF LIFE IN CANADA

In order to understand the beginnings and peculiar development of Canadian trade unions during the half-century before a trade-union movement in any true sense was evolved, it is necessary to take account of the industrial and social conditions out of which they grew.

Strictly speaking, the term "Canada" is something of a misnomer so far as the earlier part of the period is concerned, since down to confederation the term only served to cover parts of what is today included in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario. A picture of the whole country at 1825 would have revealed a group of five separate British colonies devoid of any sense of economic unity and operating directly under British legislation. The population (consisting in Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia chiefly of British, United Empire loyalist, and earlier New England stocks, and in Quebec mainly of French) lived for the most part close to the coastal and inland waters, which afforded them transportation and connection with the world outside. The leading centers were Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, St. John, and York (Toronto), the first two being garrisoned strongholds with their social life to a considerable degree flavored by the military element. Vast distances separated them; and the artificial bonds which have since drawn the different communities together in the attempt to develop a common economic life were altogether lacking. The proportion between rural and urban population would be difficult to state, owing to the lack of statistics for the country as a whole before confedera-

tion. With due allowance for craftsmen, catering to local needs, probably it would not be incorrect to say that these early cities were commercial rather than industrial; they were not manufacturing goods for distant markets. Considered broadly, the condition of life was that of the pioneer, represented by the self-sustaining farm, the winter spent at lumbering and trapping, with fishing, especially in the provinces down by the sea, taking a prominent place. In the general economy of the time the townsman served as a merchant or a direct order craftsman. Along with other phases of pioneer organization and policy went the pioneer method of providing a labor supply: the way of life calling for early marriages and the abundant raw resources making welcome the large family to reduce these to human uses. Apart, however, from this natural increase the colonies were absorbing a considerable number of British soldier settlers and immigrants from Britain and the United States. Among the latter were a goodly number of artisans, some of whom chose to live by following their trades as masters or as journeymen in the towns, while others, lured by the land and the forest, used their skill only incidentally. Probably a fair estimate of the population in 1825 would be 800,000, the majority of whom were living east of the Ottawa River.

Changes were fated to come along two different lines, each of which is pertinent to the subject of our investigation.

In the first place there was the great development in transportation facilities cutting down the distances between the sections, and bringing the country within easier range of foreign markets and outside ideas. First came the era of canal building, by which the navigation of the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa and of Lake Ontario was extended into the interior. Beginning in 1825, and backed by both British and Canadian capital, the Lachine, Welland, Rideau, Burlington, and Cornwall canals were built in rapid succession, the whole involving an expenditure at confederation of £20,500,000. Steamboat and barge transportation be-

came a great factor in the economy of the forties and fifties, and down to the middle of the century the dependence of commerce and long-distance travel upon waterways was complete. Canals and steamboats, however, while they could do much to bring together the different points in the upper colonies and to build up close trade relations with the cities south of the Lakes, were unable to link up the maritime provinces with Quebec and Ontario, and they perforce were left to stand as a separate unit looking to New England and across the sea for their markets until a much later date.

Railways began to be an important factor in the fifties. Between 1853 and 1858 the Great Western, Grand Trunk, Quebec-Richmond, and Northern systems were built, giving rail connection between London, Toronto, Montreal, Quebec, and Portland, Maine. Later, following the closing of the American market and the drawing together of the provinces into a political union, the "East and West" systems were developed, the Intercolonial at last (1876) providing a link between Halifax and Montreal, and the Canadian Pacific (completed 1886) reaching out across the prairies and making British Columbia accessible to the rest of Canada.

With this cutting down of distances and development of trade and communication came a lessening of economic independence and of provincialism in mental outlook. The country became increasingly sensitive to conditions in other lands: economic depressions, wars, labor movements, gold discoveries, new ideas—all came to find a response in Canada.

In the second place the country underwent great political change during this period. Viewed from one angle this is a story of the decline of direct British government in Canada, paradoxically accompanied by a growth in British sentiment and in the admiration and imitation of British institutions. Long before confederaton new British legislation on such matters as affect our story had ceased to apply to Canada. From another

point of view the political change may be seen as an increasing interest in political matters on the part of the "lower classes" consequent upon the inauguration of responsible government, the development of the party system, and the extension of the franchise sufficiently to make the politician susceptible to the opinions of the workers. Finally, there was the act of confederation in 1867, which brought together the four largest provinces in one federation and provided a dual system of parliaments and courts with their powers defined under a written constitution. No mere political act, however, could iron out at once the deep-seated racial differences and cause English and French Canadians to pull together for the common purpose.

Brought closer by developments in transportation and affected in some sense by the political changes we have been considering, the growing neighbor to the south exerted an increasing influence upon conditions in Canada as the period progressed. The analysis of this influence is difficult. One phase is reflected in the increasing commercial dependence operative down to the date of confederation. Under the Reciprocity Treaty, 1854-66, a great trade was built up to points south of the line, which however was due to suffer a handicap so far as exports were concerned, in the artificial checks offered by the American Congress after the Civil War. Coincident with these commercial dealings, and forming another aspect of the situation, went the interchange of ideas and introduction into Canada of American business methods and institutional forms: corporations, trade unions, currency, etc. Due, in the first place, to the unfortunate relations between Great Britain and the United States owing to incidents in the Civil War, in the second place to the hindrances to access to the American market upon which the economic life of the country had come to be so largely based, and finally to the Washington Treaty, whose terms, it was alleged, sacrificed both the prosperity and the dignity of Canada, Canadians entertained for many years a strained attitude toward the United States.

The international ill-feeling was reflected in the close attention at the time to overseas movements and ideas, and in the anxiety, displayed on various occasions, to appear to be following British rather than American precedents.

With the development of transportation and market facilities came an increase in the size of the cities; and specialization in industry seems to have become sufficient in some cases in the fifties to afford a basis for labor organization in the building and engineering trades and in certain food and clothing industries. The population of Hamilton in 1858 was 29,000 as against 10,000 in 1850. It boasted locomotive works, foundries, car and machine shops. The population of London had risen quickly to 16,000; Toronto had 50,000, and Ottawa, not yet the seat of government, numbered 10,000. In lower Canada Quebec stood at 60,000, and Montreal at 75,000.<sup>1</sup> An industry that was rising to prominence at the lake ports and in most of the cities and towns along the seaboard was that of wooden ship-building. Although it did not reach its climax until the seventies, it was already becoming important at the middle of the century.

Nevertheless the country was still predominantly devoted to agriculture, lumbering, and fishing. A directory published in 1858 declares Hamilton to be situated in the center of Canada's wheat fields, and figures for 1865-66 show the leading exports to have been lumber, wheat, flour, oats, fish, and coal. The American tariff wall, established in 1866 and persistently maintained, changed the situation somewhat, but for some time Canada's policy was devoted to finding new markets and continuing to develop along natural lines rather than to stimulate manufactures by artificial means. For a decade after confederation she refused to copy the American precedent, and it was not until 1879 that Premier McDonald brought in his "national policy" of protection. During the seventies, therefore, while the direction of trade changed to take on something of its present tri-

<sup>1</sup> *Canadian Directory*, 1858.

angular shape, its content, so far as it might affect the problems of labor organization, remained much as it had earlier; exports consisted chiefly of forest and agricultural products, cattle and fish, while the leading imports were woolen, cotton, and iron manufactures.

Speaking generally of manufacturing at the time of confederation, Professor Skelton states that it was largely for local markets, dependent on native raw products, and operated on a small scale. In many cases it catered to the necessity for manufacturing on the spot. Considered in the order of their importance (1871), and including both factory and hand trades, he puts the following at the head of his list: (1) flour mills, (2) sawmills, (3) boot and shoe establishments (including factories and cobbler shops), (4) tailor and clothier shops, (5) tanneries, (6) foundries, (7) bakeries, (8) woolen mills, (9) blacksmith shops, (10) carriage factories, (11) ship yards.<sup>2</sup> In the decade following confederation, although cotton milling advanced rapidly, the same type of industries—some of them following their raw materials far from the centers of population, and generally ill-adapted to labor organization—continued to lead. A feature of the period was the introduction of the McKay sewing press in shoe establishments to take the place of wooden pegging. Manufacture seems to have been carried on almost entirely with Canadian capital and under Canadian entrepreneurship.

Stress is frequently laid on the efficacy of an abundance of free land to solve the problems of labor. An investigation of Canadian conditions in the latter part of the period here under study would seem to indicate that this is not a correct generalization. The heavy immigration of British, in addition to agriculturists, contained a large element of skilled artisans who had little liking for throwing away the benefits of their years of apprenticeship and who consequently stood doggedly by their

<sup>2</sup> Skelton, *General Economic History*, "Canada and Its Provinces" series, Vol. IX, 108.

trades. It also contained many laborers bound to particular employers by contracts already entered into before they reached this country. Due to both these circumstances, as well as to others, the net effect of immigration, stimulated as it was by assistance in passage, was to overload the labor market in the towns in periods of slackness or depression—that market, after all, possessing relatively little elasticity. Oftentimes a surer safety valve for labor surplus seems to have been found in emigration, for although we must not overstress the poor condition of employment in the trades as a leading cause of this phenomenon, there can be little doubt that it played an important part in the loss to Canada of 750,000 of her native born who settled in the United States in the decades 1850-80.<sup>3</sup> In spite of such defections, population was mounting: from 1,750,000 in 1840 it had risen to 3,090,561 by 1861. In 1871 it stood at 3,485,761, of which only 430,000 lived in the twenty cities of 5,000 and upward.<sup>4</sup> Immigration during the seventies fluctuated between 20,000 and 50,000 per annum, tending probably to the cities more than formerly, as the best lands of Ontario and Quebec were occupied and homesteading in the West was only in its infancy.

One further point is deserving of mention: in Canadian experience labor organization has not waited upon the factory system. Rather it has risen and persisted for decades among handworkers or journeymen confronted with a common interest (cobblers, typographers, shipbuilders, etc., first of separate towns, later in unions embracing different centers) wherever it was felt that this interest could be served by united action.

## II. LABOR HISTORY, 1825-50: THE PERIOD OF ISOLATED LOCALS

Labor organization of which we have any clear record today was confined prior to 1850 chiefly to the typographical trade.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics of G. E. Jackson, *Annals of American Academy* (May, 1923).

<sup>4</sup> *Census of Canada*, V, chap. i, 428.

The oldest typographical society boasting a continuous life is that of Toronto, known today as International No. 91. It has had an uninterrupted existence since 1844. Vying with it for honors in longevity, however, is a stone-cutters union of Montreal which claims birth at the same date. But the beginnings of trade-union organization in Canada date back to an earlier period. There are rumors of organized shoemakers in Montreal in the thirties, but, lacking further information, they can only be mentioned.

Under the date of 1832, in the old records kept by the International Typographical No. 91 at Toronto, there is the following statement: "Owing to the many innovations which have been made upon the long established wages of the professors of the art of printing, and those of a kind highly detrimental to their interests, it was deemed expedient by the Journeymen Printers of York, that they should form themselves into a body, similar to societies in other parts of the world, in order to maintain that honorable station and respectability that belongs to the profession. . . ."

At a meeting held in the York Hotel the necessary resolutions were passed and a constitution was provided for.<sup>5</sup> This

<sup>5</sup> The aims of the Society thus established are set forth in the following sections of the Constitution:

#### ARTICLE II

Sec. 6: "No member shall engage in any Printing establishment in this town at prices beneath those stipulated, . . . viz., £1:15:0 per week,

Sec. 7: "Payment shall be weekly. If an employer fails to do this the member shall leave and receive 10s. per week for 3 weeks, from the Society, and, if he leaves town through unemployment, he shall receive £1.

Sec. 8: "When any member shall work over the usual number of hours (10) per day, he shall receive 10d. per hour for such extra service."

Section 9 forbade members to work in any office where more than two apprentices were employed, "except in the event of its being the last year of the eldest apprentice's time." Another article declared the apprenticeship period to be not less than 4 years (changed to 5 years in 1835).

Section 11 provided the only weapon wielded by the Society. It stated "that on any journeyman refusing to comply with the rules of the Society, those

constitution was signed by twenty-five members (journeymen and foremen) at the time of its adoption in April, 1833, and by 35 at the passage of certain amendments in 1835. Although the Society lapsed for a period, this constitution, with little remodeling, was used again after the reorganization, and it served until the affiliation with the American national in 1866. This early Toronto Typographical Society (the name was changed in 1835) went out of existence in 1837, apparently in connection with the Upper Canada Rebellion of that year led by William Lyon McKenzie, editor of the *Colonial Advocate* of Toronto.

The York Society was not alone. By 1833 societies were also in existence in Quebec, Montreal, and Hamilton, the first two having sprung up independently, the last being a result of Toronto printers having moved to Hamilton carrying the idea with them. Mr. R. H. Coats places the organization of the Quebec printers as early as 1827, and thus gives them the honor of having established the first known Canadian union.<sup>6</sup>

Although references to the Quebec typographical and to the the Montreal letter-press-printers' societies occur in the records of the York Society at this time, and although copies of the rules and discipline of the latter were forwarded to each of the former, there apparently was little or no helpful connection between these purely self-sustaining bodies. Travel was difficult and communication slow, and the minds of the workers were concerned primarily with local matters. Hence, although the problem of the stranded printer, traveling among the towns in search of work, early forced itself upon the societies, no notion of dealing with the matter in a united way appears to have been entertained. The large proportion of French in the Quebec societies may have been a factor in the tardiness in this matter.

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journeymen members of the Society working in that office, shall notify the employer of the same, and shall refuse to work until the said journeyman does comply, or leaves the office."

<sup>6</sup> *Labor Movement of Canada*, "Canada and Its Provinces" series, Vol. IX, 292.

This insularity and complete preoccupation with home affairs was effective in keeping mention of other unions—if there were such at the time—out of the records. An indirect reference that would suggest their existence occurs in a speech made by one Riddell at a banquet held by the Toronto union in 1848, where he speaks “of the several trade societies throughout the province.”

The employers at first viewed with suspicion the formation of these societies, but were disarmed by the assurance imbedded in the constitutions that the purpose of organization was “the mutual interest of employers and employed.” As expressed by W. L. McKenzie, when he and other Toronto publishers were in attendance as guests at the anniversary dinner of the York Society in 1833: “Since he had investigated the principles of the constitution he could find nothing therein but a consistent and moderate policy—nothing that savored of exclusive privileges—but on the contrary arrangements that would secure respectability to journeymen without interfering with the interests and prerogatives of the employers.”<sup>7</sup> Mr. Stanton, king’s printer, expressed himself even more warmly on the same occasion, declaring his friendliness to such societies “when conducted upon proper principles and with due regard to morality of their members, because he believed they were calculated to benefit society generally.” The motto adopted upon reorganization in 1844 advertised even more vividly this phase of the Society’s purpose. Its wording read “United to support, not combined to injure.”

Similarly, in the case of the *Société Typographique Canadienne* of Quebec City, the language used was of a nature calculated to disarm employers’ opposition. In a petition signed with sixty-six names, English and French, and addressed to the editors of papers and master-printers of Quebec in the late thirties, the journeymen printers make a formal demand for an increase in rates. In very respectful terms they call attention to

<sup>7</sup> Referred to in Minutes of Society, 1848.

the increased prices of food, clothing, and rents, to the higher wages in trades of shorter apprenticeship, such as carpenters and joiners, and to the impossibility of breaking even with expenses. But they declare they have no intention of operating "what is called in English 'a strike'" and are strong in their assurances that they only wish to be indebted for their increase "to your good will and to the justice of our demand." Along with an increase they ask that the masters establish a uniform rate in all the printeries, arguing that "in doing this the master-printers will protect their industry and will put themselves in condition to meet the just demands of their employees. . . ."<sup>8</sup>

As for the public, while there is no record of any attack upon these first unassuming locals, it is known that its attitude was not friendly. The president of the Toronto Typographical in 1845 protested against the distribution by the union of circulars condemning the practices indulged in by one of the publishers, "because the public . . . are averse to any kind of combinations among workmen, how mild soever their form, or righteous their intentions."<sup>9</sup> And references occur in the records from time to time defending the societies against implied charges suggesting that they were accounted an influence making for low morality and drunkenness.

Certain points force themselves upon the attention in reading these early records. One of these is how dependent the worker was upon the fortunes and the good will of a small group of employing masters in his own town, and how little stood between him and that poverty to which a few days of unemployment reduced him. For even in that day of local economy minor depressions disturbed the regularity of business, and unnecessary workers appeared from time to time from other countries in response to advertisements placed by employers who saw advan-

<sup>8</sup> *Souvenir de la 57<sup>ième</sup> Anniversaire de l'Union Typographique de Quebec* (1912).

<sup>9</sup> Minutes of Toronto Typographical Society, July, 1845.

tages to themselves in having a well-stocked labor market. The problem of assistance to unemployed members, and often to brother printers from distant places who were not members, troubled the societies and caused their greatest item of expenditure. There were frequent resolutions in the early Toronto society authorizing the treasurer to advance a pound to help a brother printer to meet his bills or to proceed to some other town. "Your bounty," reports Thomas Hill as chairman of the finance committee of 1844, "has enabled us in more than one instance to rescue from privation our less fortunate fellow-workmen. . . . Next to the great object of maintaining our own position in the trade, let us view that of administering to the wants of others in the profession." Free land, that much-talked-of safety-valve for the ills of an overabundant labor supply in earlier days, seems to have played little part in the affairs of these skilled craftsmen. The recurrence of the same names on the membership rôle year after year—now taking an active part in the society, now in distress, or perhaps receiving aid to travel to another place in search of work, but later returning—is evidence of the complete dependence of these men upon their profession. As early as the forties the phrase appears, "Once a printer, always a printer."

During 1845 one Peter Brown, recently arrived from the United States and publisher of the *Banner*, a semireligious paper published in the interest of the Free Church, struck at the foundations of the Toronto society by dismissing some of its leading members from his employ and announcing a non-union policy. The society retaliated by declaring the *Banner* office "unfair" for a space of two years, and publicly circularizing Brown for his action. In its *Plain Statement of Facts*, of which it distributed 250 copies, it sought to acquaint the public with the truth about the dismissal of members and hiring of undercutting workers at the *Banner* office. In the argument was included a clear recital of the modest purposes of the society as

expressed in the constitution. In connection with this matter we have one of the first instances of an attempt at control by seeking the assistance of a fellow-union. The secretary was instructed to communicate to the society at Buffalo "the actual state of things at the *Banner* office." How much they succeeded in damaging their enemy in this way is not known, but the weakness of their position, since they lacked any complete control of the labor market and since every member thrown out of employment became such a burden upon their little group, is evident. It was remarked at the time that they must be careful not to anger the general press of the city. Nevertheless such tussles with individual employers did take place from time to time, the occasion often arising from the moral weakness or the unfortunate circumstances of members who agreed to work for less than the minimum called for by the rules. In such cases the member also was summarily dealt with and expelled from membership. The policy of the closed shop was always followed, but, while at Quebec the union included all the journeymen printers, in Ontario the scab shop ever remained to reduce the effectiveness of the societies. Sporadic drives were made to impress upon outsiders the benefit that would accrue to all if the trade were thoroughly organized; but in general this was not accomplished because of lack of responsible organizers. Just prior to the close of the period, however, as a result of anniversary dinner activities, the inauguration of provident features in connection with the union, and the unusual organizing zeal of one of the leaders, the printers of Toronto approached a condition of full organization, the membership standing at forty-four. ✓

Throughout this period rates appear to have been maintained without being advanced. They seem to have been largely fortified in custom and public opinion, for they were not lowered even during the seven years while the union lay dormant. The effort at Quebec to secure a general increase stands isolated; the subject does not seem to have been broached at Toronto. After

all, these societies found their strength in the comparative isolation and lack of any habit of co-operation among the many small publishers and jobbers who employed them. Any forceful attempt at raising the wage standard would have defeated its purpose by driving the employers together, and would probably have resulted in the undoing of the society. It would seem that the actual gains by these earlier unions, in so far as these were conceded by the employers, were won through the merits of organized and well-argued protest rather than through force or threat of force.

From the first, both at Quebec and Toronto, the question of apprentices was a difficult one for the societies. In both places it was repeatedly pointed out that an oversupply of uninstructed youths worked an injury, not only to the workers, but also to the patrons. The constitutional ruling of the Toronto society has already been noted; yet in 1844 a committee appointed by it reported: "The mania for taking boys seems stronger than ever. Your Committee candidly avow their incapacity to recommend any specific remedy for this baneful practice." Again in 1846 the same society passed a resolution condemning the re-binding of apprentices for a second term, as some employers were doing, as injurious to the employer, as conducive to idleness and lack of ambition in the apprentice, and as undermining the wage standards of the trade.

Another problem was that of overtime work and unnecessary night work, and in this matter their efforts appear to have met with a fair measure of success. Some benefit also probably came from activities of the societies in publishing statistics of the trade to counteract the too-alluring pictures as painted by others. Doubtless more important than either were the educational and social effects resulting from the monthly meetings and anniversary celebrations; and not the least important educational feature was the idea of unionism itself considered as a permanent institution by these small yet influential groups of the country's workers.

## III. 1851-70: CO-OPERATION WITHIN THE TRADE

The middle of the century is noteworthy as marking the entrance of an outside union into Canada. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers was an English organization, recently formed but zealous to expand, which invaded the United States and Canada. It established a branch at Toronto in 1850, others at Hamilton, Kingston, and Montreal the following year, and some time later still others at London and Stratford. For a decade it was to remain the only organization with an outside connection. In 1860, however, came another, also with its roots in the Old Country, the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners. This appears to have been the first permanent union in Ontario in the building trades. It too established branches in Hamilton and Toronto, and one in London a little later. Its aggressiveness is indicated by the fact that as early as 1859 it was trying to force a nine-hour day in Britain and made an appeal to the Toronto Typographical Society<sup>10</sup> for assistance. These amalgamated societies made their appeal in Canada largely on account of their emphasis on benefits. The Carpenters' and Joiners' Society provided for payment of benefits against unemployment, sickness, death, funeral, and superannuation.

In addition to the items mentioned in the foregoing, there is some evidence that an English stone-masons' union had a following in Canada during this period.

Beyond the branches of these two or three English societies whatever organizing activity there was in the fifties appears to have been of a spontaneous indigenous type like that of the earlier decades. Little is known of the activities of such unions, as they did not survive long enough to connect with the later movement that has found a place in history. But it is known that a Shipwrights' and Caulkers' Association was in existence for a

<sup>10</sup> The secretary was instructed to write in reply "that on account of the distance which separates us from those engaged in the contest, and the many claims recently made upon our finances by persons connected with our own profession, we do not consider it expedient to accede to their request."

brief period about 1850 at Kingston, that the Toronto bakers organized a union a little later with the object of getting their hours reduced and regularized, and that the journeymen tailors of the same city formed a society in 1852 to oppose the introduction of the Singer sewing machine, a purpose in which they appear in the first instance to have been successful, but from which they were forced to recede when this too efficient competitor began to be operated in other places.

Coincident with the Crimean War, the California gold rush, and the railway-building in Canada there was a marked rise in prices and probably some degree of scarcity of laborers in the Ontario towns. These conditions were reflected in strikes for wage increases among the bricklayers, carpenters, and in successful demands for higher piece rates by the printers.<sup>11</sup>

The decade of the sixties marks a great step forward in organization of local unions, and it may be said that in this period the basis of the modern Canadian labor movement was laid. Under the reciprocity pact the country had gone forward rapidly. Although little foreign capital came in, it was a time of industrial expansion, increase in population, and commercial prosperity. With the large trading to the south came a rapid infiltration of Canada by the labor organizations of the United States, which were at this time beginning to reach out toward their national and international programs. In 1852 the National Typographical Union had been founded. In 1859 the Toronto Typographical Society, by then a well-established organization of over seventy members, received a letter from the national suggesting affiliation. The matter was referred to a standing committee, but "owing to lack of information" the latter failed to arrive at any decision at this time. Nevertheless the minutes of the society show that before 1860 the practice had become well established, not only of making free use of transfer cards, but of receiving lists of members in good standing from many of the

<sup>11</sup> J. McA. Conner, *The Municipality of Toronto*, chap. viii (unpublished).

American locals as well as from the Canadian, and of sending out circulars of the Toronto membership in return. Some attention was also paid to exchanging information regarding conditions of the trade in the different towns. Twenty-five members of the Toronto society were reported as subscribing to the *Printer*, the official publication of the American national, in 1860.

The Iron Molders' Union of North America (formed in 1859) established branches at Montreal, Hamilton, London, and Toronto in the period 1861-63. The Montreal branch No. 21 of the iron molders is probably the pioneer of international unions in Canada. The charter of the Toronto local issued on June 8, 1863, and bearing the signature of William H. Sylvis, is treasured as a relic by the Toronto molders of today.<sup>12</sup> Concerning the founding and beginnings of the London branch a local historian says: "The craftsmen saw they were unable to sell their labor to the best advantage owing to their disorganized condition"; accordingly they appealed to the international for a charter. During the early years "the members passed through many a conflict" which at times discouraged them. The original charter was lost, but a new one was granted in 1874.<sup>13</sup>

As already noticed, the Toronto Typographical Society was solicited to join the American national union in 1859. Some years later the latter set out to bring in the several typographical societies in the British provinces and to organize others where they did not yet exist. Beginning with the one at St. John, New Brunswick, in 1865, branches were soon established at Montreal, Ottawa, Halifax, Hamilton, and London. The Toronto society was affiliated in 1866, that of Quebec not until some years later (1872). Meanwhile the name of the parent organization had been changed to its present title, the International Typographical Union.

Another entry of the period from south of the line was that

<sup>12</sup> *Toronto Trades and Labor Council Souvenir*, 1898.

<sup>13</sup> *Labor Day Souvenir*, London Trades and Labor Council, 1896.

of the cigar-makers. A local was established at Montreal in 1865 at the instance of Hungarian workers who had come from the United States in search of work. It seems to have commanded a goodly number of adherents and to have done much "to better the numerous evils of the trade."<sup>14</sup> A second branch of the same union was founded at Toronto in 1869. Still another contribution by the Americans was the International Journeymen Coopers, which entered Ontario at the close of the sixties, forming branches at London and Toronto and expanding rapidly in the early seventies into one of the most vigorous and progressive organizations in the province.

The period of the sixties marks the beginning of unionism in the transportation industry consequent upon the development of railway lines in Canada. Beginning with the lodges at Belleville and Hamilton in 1864, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers in a few years established branches in the leading Ontario towns and at Montreal and Halifax. The Brotherhood of Railway Conductors followed with three branches in Ontario in 1868.

Against a background of what seems to have been an intermittent brand of local unionism in the shoe industry confined to a few main centers, the Knights of St. Crispin crossed the border almost at once after their birth at Milwaukee and established their order in Canada beginning in 1867. By the end of 1870 they had seventeen lodges in the various provinces, some of the more important being those at Montreal, Quebec, Toronto (4 lodges), Guelph, Hamilton, Windsor, Georgetown, and St. John, New Brunswick.<sup>15</sup> In the early scheme of organization of the Knights a part at least of the Canadian lodges were extensions of different state lodges; thus the lodge at Georgetown, Ontario, was recognized by the Michigan state lodge, while the one at Prescott, Ontario, was recognized by the state lodge of New

<sup>14</sup> *Souvenir de la Fête du Travail* (Montreal, 1906).

<sup>15</sup> Lescohier, *Knights of St. Crispin*, p. 7.

York.<sup>16</sup> The Ontario lodges of the Crispins seem to have survived the disintegration of the order which took place in 1871-72, as they are found playing a prominent part in the formation of the Canadian Labor Union in 1874 and active in organizing new branches of their own during the following year.

It must not be inferred from the foregoing that the initiative had departed from the Canadian workers in regard to organizing unions, or that the British influence was dead. In keeping with the great development of Canadian shipbuilding during this period, and with the flourishing ocean, lakes, and coastal trading, important organizations sprang up at the various ports. The early Shipwrights' and Caulkers' Association at Kingston has already been cited. A similar society was formed at Victoria in 1862, this being the only trade union west of Ontario before 1880. A ship-laborers' benevolent society was organized at Quebec the same year, a shipwrights' and caulkers' association at Halifax (1863), a ship-laborers' society at St. John, and a French ship-laborers' benevolent society at Quebec in 1865. About the same time a society was formed among the wharf porters of Montreal, and, a little later, one among the longshoremen of Toronto.

Other purely Canadian unions that flourished at this time were the Journeymen Bakers and Journeymen Tailors, the latter stoutly maintaining itself upon its control of hand apprenticeship. A bricklayers' union called the London Bricklayers' Protective Association was formed at London in 1863, the object being to raise the wage rate. It struggled in the face of failure for some years until, in an attempt to excite more interest, a sick benefit was added and the name changed to the London Protective and Benefit Society. Subsequently it suspended entirely for a time; finally it was reorganized and linked with the American international which entered Ontario in the seventies.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.

Unions were also operated among the workers employed in the construction of the parliament buildings at Ottawa.

Of the total number of unions in the country at the end of the sixties we lack definite knowledge, but, if we may anticipate a little, we are told that in 1874 the secretary of the Canadian Labor Union corresponded with "upwards of seventy unions"

TABLE I

Name of Union	Branches	Number of Representatives (1 per 100 Members)
Amalgamated Society of Engineers..	Toronto and Hamilton	3
Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners.....	Toronto and London	3
Bricklayers and Masons.....	Toronto and Ottawa	3
Bakers.....	Toronto	1
Coopers' International.....	Bowmanville, Seaforth, St. Cath- erine's, and Toronto	4
Iron-Molders.....	Cobourg, Hamilton, Toronto	4
K.O.S.C.....	Hamilton, London, St. Cath- erine's, and Toronto	7
Longshoremen.....	Toronto	2
Machinists and Blacksmiths.....	Hamilton and Toronto	2
Limestone Cutters.....	Ottawa	1
Painters.....	Toronto	1
Free-stone Cutters.....	Ottawa	1
Tailors.....	.....	1
Typographical.....	Ottawa and Toronto	4
Toronto Trades Assembly.....	.....	3

in his effort to carry out the plans of that organization looking to centralization. A list of the fourteen unions sending representatives to the first convention of that body, with the number from each, will serve as a rough index of the organizations in Ontario at that date. It will be noted that the railway brotherhoods took no part and that the chief activity in this matter was confined to half a dozen of the leading industrial centers. The list is given in Table I. Communications of approval were received from eight other locals in Ontario, viz., Knights of St. Crispin (2 branches), Coopers (4 branches), Iron Molders and

Amalgamated Carpenters (1 each), and from the typographical unions of Quebec and Montreal.<sup>17</sup>

Save for the typographical societies, little is known of the activities of the unions before 1870. With no suggestion of co-operation through city centrals or intertrade federations of any sort, it would seem that, except for holding an occasional picnic together, they had little to do with one another until the very close of the period. Where several locals of a trade were organized under a common parent organization, as in the case of the American internationals, there was co-operation with respect to the trade; where such organization was lacking, even this measure of concurrence was not to be found. There is evidence that they lent themselves in a few cases to considerable social and political activities, but this was not the rule, and the activities varied among different groups. Their way of life was naturally affected by contemporary events and the type of opposition which they encountered. As an illustration of their operations certain high points in the record of the large Shipwrights' and Caulkers' Association of Halifax and Dartmouth may be cited. Founded in 1863 and incorporated by an act of the provincial legislature, it met with difficulties almost at once through the storekeeper of the Royal Dockyard refusing to allow any of the government employees to become members. The trouble was eventually overcome and the Association turned its energies toward a reduction of hours, making as its first demand a cessation of work on Saturday at 5 P.M. By 1872 its workday was from 7 A.M. to 5 P.M. during the summer months and from 8 A.M. to sundown the rest of the year. It showed considerable public spirit from time to time. Thus, in 1865 it became greatly interested in the question of confederation, and invited popular orators of the day to address the workers on the subject. It also took a prominent part in the entertainment of the Canadian delegates, Sir A. T. Galt and Sir George Cartier, when they vis-

<sup>17</sup> *Labor Gazette*, II, 92.

ited the province in connection with that project. It is recorded, however, that these activities "caused some trouble, and in future it decided not to take part in political demonstrations."<sup>18</sup> In 1866 we find it contributing \$50 to the sufferers from the Quebec Fire.

Another illustration is afforded by the Knights of St. Crispin. The order was founded to protect the worker against the abuse of machinery in the shoe factories which were being built in the sixties as competitors of the small shops and the household economy. Its plan was to accept the machine, but to resist the operation of it by green hands, and constitutionally the only causes for which its members could strike were in defense of the order and the vindication of this right to refuse to teach new hands the ways of the trade except according to the organization's own restrictive terms. These aggressive methods of controlling the labor supply brought upon it the enmity of the employers. Strikes took place in 1869 and 1870 at Toronto, Georgetown, Wrentham, and Quebec. The one at Georgetown involved forty-seven persons and lasted 5 weeks; that at Quebec lasted 9 weeks and called for the payment of \$3,472.78 in strike relief from the headquarters of the order.<sup>19</sup> In his report to the 1870 convention at Boston, the Grand Scribe wrote: "Our lodge at Quebec is in a very low condition indeed; the men are persecuted for being members of the Order, and they have asked me to give them an honorable discharge and let them go. . . ."

He speaks further of the Grand Master having visited Quebec at the time of the strike, and also St. John, where he braced up the already drooping lodge.<sup>20</sup> The Crispins at St. John entered into a project for workers' co-operative shoe production in 1869.

<sup>18</sup> *Trades and Labor Congress Souvenir*, 1908.

<sup>19</sup> It is doubtful if the lodges were supported to the full extent of their claims in any of the cases, as the great uncontrolled organization was already beginning to suffer from financial weakness.

<sup>20</sup> Lescohier, *Knights of St. Crispin*, p. 87.

According to the local correspondent, \$20,000 was raised among them and the best factory in the city equipped with machinery. Offers from Boston dealers to take their product were refused, "the co-operators aiming to enter the market themselves."<sup>21</sup> At Toronto we find them getting a loan of \$150 from the Typographical No. 91, the money being granted by the latter "provided their internal difficulties were amicably settled."<sup>22</sup>

Among the typographical unions the beginnings of co-operation preceded the advent of the international. Hamilton, Toronto, and Buffalo were keeping each other posted with regard to "rat" offices in their respective cities as early as 1860, and the resistance put up by the Quebec society in 1862 against a reduction in wages at the government printing offices was keenly watched at Toronto and a resolution of sympathy forwarded. The temperament of the French worker seems to have expressed itself largely in activities of an educational and social nature. The Quebec Typographical Society, which was revived in 1855 after a lapse of a decade, laid down as its platform and principal aims "to remedy their [workers'] ills, to maintain among them the lines of the most brotherly amity, and to instruct and perfect them in the art of typography." In accordance with the first two of these aims, the Society strove to maintain wages, to regulate the employment of apprentices, and to dispense aid in cases of sickness and death. As for the third purpose, in order to encourage union sentiments and a taste for education and literature, a library was established in 1860 which in the course of time numbered over 1,000 volumes, and lectures were offered from time to time. The meetings of the Society were characterized by oratorical efforts, and a little later a series of dramatical *soirées* were given to crowded houses, in one case the net proceeds running as high as \$178 (1875). The union was honored in 1860 by being charged with publishing the poetry for the re-

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>22</sup> Minutes of Toronto Typographical Society, 1870.

ception accorded to the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII. Its membership at this period included men who later became leaders in the province in journalism, dramatic art, and public life. In 1872, when the international locals No. 159 and No. 160 replaced the old Society, the former embracing the French, and the latter the English, members, the accumulated funds, amounting to \$1,200, were distributed among the members on the basis of period of contribution.<sup>23</sup>

The Toronto Typographical Society, prior to its affiliation with the international in 1866, followed a less spectacular, yet useful course, its activities being greatly affected by the conditions of the trade. Its membership reached seventy-six in 1859, but slumped to less than half that number by 1865, the time being marked by indifference and a general exodus of printers to the United States. As a result of affiliation and the prosperity of the city, growth was rapid during the next few years. By the end of the decade it claimed 162 members. Twice during the fifties the Society, in its efforts to keep up rates and maintain the closed shop, had been forced to marshal its forces to deal with particular employers. In the last of these struggles (1859) three prominent publishers, led by George Brown, of the *Globe*, declared for a reduction in wage rates from 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  cents to 28 cents per 1,000 ems, stating their inability to pay more. During the interviews that followed, the question of extra pay for night work, which was becoming common on the morning papers, was introduced by the committee from the Society. The outcome was a compromise with respect to two of the offices, it being agreed that 30 cents should be the rate, and that night work should be reduced to a minimum; but Mr. Brown, being obdurate, and having secured workers at his own figures, the *Globe* office was declared "closed" by the union to its members. The reduction at Toronto immediately affected Hamilton and brought trouble there. During the next few years, during which there was a fall-

<sup>23</sup> The English and French branches were reunited in 1893 in No. 302.

ing membership of the Toronto Society, several other offices were closed and labeled "rat offices."

It will be seen from the foregoing that the isolated union was finding it increasingly difficult to meet the situation with the old weapons. These might still serve at Quebec, fortified in some measure by lingual and geographic isolation, but not in Ontario. It is true that the Ontario typographicals were doing a fine work as relief societies, and in this way providing some measure of economic security to the life of the workers,<sup>24</sup> but the time had come for a show of strength in support of demands that were bound to stimulate an organized opposition. Among the first acts of the Toronto union, after the securing of the charter from the national, was that of sending out circulars to the various employers announcing a general increase in weekly wages from \$9 to \$10 and supporting the demand by a strike wherever it was not well received.

While there is no formal co-operation other than that within the boundaries of each craft during this period, one can see the trend toward greater class fellowship in the increase of informal workers' activities. The practice of having the employers present as guests at anniversary dinners was discontinued; common picnics began to be an annual feature among the unions in the larger centers; complimentary tickets to union dances were extended to the officers of other unions; less stress was laid upon viewing the interests of employers and employed "as one and indivisible"; and finally, at the very close of the period, the different crafts began to find a common interest in the movement for a shorter working day. Perhaps the earliest case of two unions actually getting together on a piece of constructive work was in April, 1869, when the Toronto bookbinders' and typographical unions co-operated to thwart the removal of a 5 per

<sup>24</sup> Out of a total disbursement of \$128.63 in 1859, \$23.00 went to sick relief, and \$27.50 to "distressed typos." During 1864 the payments were: sick allowance, \$37.00; distressed members, \$5.00; to traveling printers, \$21.50; other expenses, \$16.65. Relief features were first provided for constitutionally in 1848.

cent duty on imported books. A joint committee got out a petition addressed to the Dominion parliament and sent it to different parts of the country for signature. "Doubtless this action was instrumental," says the report on the outcome, "in causing the promoters of the measure to desist from further efforts to repeal the tax."<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile geographical concurrence within the crafts was making rapid strides. To illustrate again from the typographical unions, we find the officers of the Montreal, Hamilton, and Toronto locals representing their home union at the banquets of the others; the Toronto union lending itself to the organization of new branches as well as assisting financially strikes in other places. In 1869, \$150 was sent to Montreal, \$75.00 to Ottawa, \$50 to New York, and \$25 to Erie, all in support of strikes. This stands in strong contrast to the attitude existing before affiliation, when every such request for financial assistance was refused.

#### IV. DECADE OF THE SEVENTIES: INTERCRAFT ACTIVITIES AND BEGINNINGS OF FEDERATION

*City centrals.*—The first city central in Canada was the Toronto Trades Assembly; organized in 1871. The honors for the initiation of the idea go to coopers' international No. 3 of Ontario, then ably led by John Hewitt and M. A. Foran. Early in March it appointed a committee of three to confer with other unions and workers' societies with respect to the formation of a central body. This committee visited the other organizations (of which there were about fifteen in the city at this time) and asked each to appoint three members to meet with it to discuss the question. The outcome was a meeting on March 27 of representatives of the following unions: journeymen bakers, cigar-makers, iron molders, journeymen coopers, Knights of St. Crispin (3 lodges), and typographical No. 91. The scheme of a

<sup>25</sup> Minutes of Typographical Union No. 91, 1869.

central organization was approved, and a committee was appointed to carry on the initiatory work. At a second meeting held in Iron Molders' Hall a fortnight later the Toronto Trades Assembly was formally launched, with J. S. Williams, of the Typographical Union, as president, and John Carter, of the painters, as secretary.

The most active years of the Toronto Trades Assembly were those immediately following its formation, when it was called upon to take the lead in directing the nine-hour movement in Canada and the famous indignation outburst in connection with the arrest of the Toronto printers. Somewhat later it was responsible for holding the first meeting of labor delegates from different labor centers, out of which originated the Canadian Labor Union. It "contributed in no small degree" in securing the passage by the Dominion parliament of the Trades Union Act of 1872 and the criminal law amendment acts of 1872, 1875, and 1876. In the Ontario parliament it led in procuring the passage of the Mechanics Lien Amendment Act, 1874, Franchise Extension Act—to all paying taxes on more than \$400 income—of the same year, and an act to provide for voting by ballot in municipal elections.<sup>26</sup>

In general it may be said of the Toronto Trades Assembly that it numbered in its ranks some of the ablest and most far-seeing men that the Canadian labor movement has produced, that it played the leading rôle in bringing that movement for the first time to the notice of the public as a force in the life of the country, and that both in the value of its work and in the control that it maintained through the stormiest days that unionism has seen in Ontario it affords a chapter which no student of Canadian history can afford to miss. Despite this record, however, the business depression which came upon the country during the years 1875-80 "materially as well as prejudicially" affected it to

<sup>26</sup> D. J. O'Donoghue, in *Toronto Trades and Labor Council Souvenir*, 1898.

such an extent as to render it practically quiescent, allowing it to live only as an idea.<sup>27</sup>

Second only in importance to the Trades Assembly of Toronto was the Ottawa Trades Council, which we find functioning as a live and aggressive institution by 1873 with D. J. O'Donoghue as the leading spirit. Certain building-trades organizations appear to have existed in Ottawa ever since the beginning of the parliament buildings, and these were supplemented by the Typographical Union in 1866. But it was in connection with a strike of the latter in 1873 against the contractor for the government printing that the Trades Council first comes before our notice. In this strike, which lasted for many weeks, the contractor, failing to secure enough non-union men in Canada, had recourse to direct importation of compositors from Great Britain and France. Yet so loyally were the strikers sustained by the local unions and by the national typographical that his efforts availed him little; he was so crippled that he eventually lost the contract through inability to perform the work.

The Ottawa Council now turned its attention to the securing of direct political representation, offering its president as a labor candidate in a by-election for the provincial legislature in 1873, and putting in another entry in the regular elections of the following year. In both cases the workers' candidates were sustained, giving labor a direct voice at Toronto. But with the completion of the government buildings shortly after this and the general depression of the time there was a general exodus of mechanics and laboring men from Ottawa. The Council disappeared, a third political effort failed, and in 1879 there was but one trade union in the city.<sup>28</sup>

Running closely in conjunction with the Toronto Trades Assembly in the early seventies was a third city central in the

<sup>27</sup> D. J. O'Donoghue, in *Toronto Trades and Labor Council Souvenir*, 1898.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. D. J. O'Donoghue, in *Ontario Bureau of Industries Report of 1886*, p. 75.

city of Hamilton. Beyond references to its vigorous activities in connection with the nine-hour movement, little record of its history comes down to us.

*The nine-hour movement.*—Up to this time the trade unions of Canada had existed either as outlying branches of organizations in England and the United States or as individual native societies. In the latter case their interest had been entirely concentrated on local affairs; and in the former they had valued the foreign connection chiefly for its wider resources as a system of mutual insurance and an equalizer of economic shocks, while regarding the changing programs and tendencies of labor movements in other lands as watchers from afar. The political experiments, the radicalism, and the various panaceas which successively challenged industrial methods in the United States found no response in Canada—if perchance they were known among the workers at all. The outlook in Canada was local and divided, in fact there was no labor *movement*. But now with the opening up of the country by railroads, with the heavy immigration, with the building up of the Ontario towns and the progressive association of workers, all this was to be changed. Even as Canada began to sense her nationhood with the linking up of the provinces, her workers also began to feel the need of unity among themselves and to sense their responsibility as a factor in the labor movement of the world. Indeed, at no time were the Canadian workmen more convinced of the common destiny of all laborers and the need of standing together than during those first years of national consciousness when Canada was held in the grip of the nine-hour movement.

The awakening seems to have begun in 1869. In that year we find the Typographical Union of Toronto sending its first memorial to the employers asking for a reduction of hours from 60 to 58 per week. The demand was refused, but it was resolved that "it be not suffered to drop, but be considered as our right to be obtained as soon as practicable and that in the meantime

a committee be appointed to wait on the employers and disabuse them of some erroneous ideas they have conceived as to the loss they will suffer by granting the concession." In February, 1870, the committee reported that certain leading employers had declined to confer with them.

The source of the stimulation of this first modest attempt to bring about a reduction of hours is not known, but it is known that the drive for the nine-hour day was on in the mother-country and that eight-hour leagues were in full swing in the United States in the late sixties, being indorsed by the National Labor Union of that country. In the spring of 1871 the nine-hour league was formed among the workers of Hamilton; and its secretary, subsequently to figure as a prominent leader in the Canadian nine-hour movement, at once sought the support of the Toronto Trades Assembly on behalf of the movement. On September 20, 1871, the *Toronto Globe* referred editorially to the emphasis being laid by labor on this demand in England and to the monster meetings for the same purpose in New York.

The culmination of the difficulties in Toronto came in the spring of 1872. The Typographical Union had again asked for a conference with the employers to discuss and settle differences, and been refused. Following this the bookbinders' union had demanded a nine-hour day while accepting correspondingly reduced wages, and also had been denied its request. The celebrated "printers' strike" was called on March 25. On April 14 a demonstration was held in the city to impress upon the public mind the unity of labor in this matter and the reasonableness of its demands. A parade of thirteen unions and other workers, numbering 2,000 persons, marched through the streets headed by two bands. The unions represented were the iron molders, bricklayers and masons, cigar-makers, coopers, coach-makers, blacksmiths and machinists, bakers, varnishers and polishers, Knights of St. Crispin, Amalgamated Engineers, typographical, bookbinders, and employees of R. Hay & Company. Chief hon-

or at the parade was done to the printers and bookbinders, "on account of their being the pioneers in the nine-hour movement."<sup>29</sup> The procession came to a halt at Queen's Park, where a meeting of 10,000 workers and citizens was held, the chair being occupied by J. S. Williams, president of the Toronto Trades Assembly. Speeches were made by leaders of the workers and prominent men of Toronto, including Mr. Beatty, M.P. The burden of the addresses consisted in eulogizing the nine-hour day, in advertising its progress in England, in vindicating the institution of unionism, and in denouncing Hon. George Brown, of the *Globe*, who not only was opposing all attempts to unionize his own offices, but was using his columns to express the sentiments of those who viewed unions as breeders of discontent and as detrimental to capital.

The answer to this public expression of the attitude of the workers was the arrest on the following day, at the instance of the Master Printers' Association, of the whole committee of the Typographical Union, twenty-four in number, on a charge of seditious conspiracy. Mr. Williams and John Armstrong, later to become international president of the union, were among those arrested, the former being shortly freed on bail, but Armstrong being obliged to spend a brief captivity in the Toronto jail.

In the evening a great indignation meeting was held, the men marching from Trades Assembly Hall to the square before the city council chamber. John Hewitt, of the coopers' union, presided, and the crowd was addressed by A. W. Lauder, M.P.P., Mr. E. K. Dodds, Mr. Roden, of the *Leader*, which paper sponsored the cause of the workers against the *Globe*, R. S. Williams, and Andrew Scott. The last-named moved the resolution "That this meeting views with indignation the outrage that has this day been committed upon a peaceful community by the arrest of twenty-four highly respected workingmen, and pledges its determination to support them under all circumstances; and fur-

<sup>29</sup> *Ontario Workman* (April 18, 1872).

ther resolves to use all available means for the repeal of any law that might exist to warrant such an unjustifiable interference with the rights of the people.<sup>30</sup>

The arrest brought out clearly the weakness of trade unions before the law in Canada. As the situation existed, being unaffected by the British Trade Union Act of 1871, which legalized trade unions in the motherland, and lacking any statutory recognition in this country, the trade unions could fall back only upon the earlier English statutes and the common law decisions. In a word, they were illegal bodies without their being aware of it, and the employers were within their legal rights in causing the arrests.

From this *impasse* the way out was clear. The necessary legislation must be secured. The leaders seized the opportunity afforded by the enthusiasm of the time to drive home upon the public mind the entire injustice of such a situation: that Canada, a country of boasted equality, should continue thus while England, a land of caste and privilege, gave rights to workingmen was unthinkable; tradesmen recently arrived from Britain lost nothing of the occasion to add their complaint, and the name of George Brown, who was now attempting to break the strike of the printers by importing workers from the rural districts, became a synonym for unfairness and oppression. Brown being a leader of the Liberals in the federal house, and the *Globe* being the leading Liberal organ in Canada, the question naturally took on at the time something of a party color. The *Toronto Leader*, the *Montreal Star*, and the *Hamilton Standard* espoused the cause of the unionists, scoring Brown for his threats to blacklist and for other methods used against the strikers.

The outcome was the passage of a bill introduced by Sir John A. McDonald and unopposed by Hon. A. McKenzie, then leading the Liberals, which was almost an exact copy of the British act of the previous year, relieving Canadian workmen of

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

the inconveniences experienced under early English laws. Sir John, in introducing the measure, remarked that it would be well for Canadians to watch the results of the keen deliberations going on in England at the time. But subject to amendments which might be deemed necessary with additional light, he proposed as a remedy this bill consisting of two complementary measures, one affecting the civil, the other the criminal, law with respect to trade unions.<sup>31</sup> Clause 32 of the act reads: "The purposes of any Trade Union shall not, by reason merely that they are in restraint of trade, be deemed to be unlawful, so as to render any member of such Trade Union liable to prosecution for criminal conspiracy or otherwise, or as to render void or voidable any agreement or trust."<sup>32</sup> In the criminal law section, the act, briefly stated, exempted trade unions from the law on illegal acts in restraint of trade, and attempted to define the boundaries of legality in respect to union tactics.

Prominent in the act, and considered of great importance at the time, are sections providing for the registration of trade unions; but whatever may be true of the future, this provision has played little part in Canadian unionism to date, being in large measure ignored. During the discussion of the bill in Parliament Mr. McKenzie, while anxious to do nothing to retard its passage, spoke in favor of making registration compulsory upon all unions.

Thus, incidental to the nine-hour strike of the typographers of Toronto, trade unions in Canada arose suddenly from a position of obscurity and received within a few months official recognition as legal institutions through this piece of legislation so fundamental to their existence. As for the arrested printers, the two parties armed for the coming suit, the workers even appealing to the operative classes in England to come to their financial aid in building up a "defense fund" for the payment of legal tal-

<sup>31</sup> *Dominion Parliamentary Debates* (1872), pp. 391-1122.

<sup>32</sup> *Report on Labor Legislation* (1920), p. 89.

ent. It is noteworthy that this appeal was not confined to printers, but was signed by representative unionists and secretaries of nine-hour leagues from many towns of Ontario and Quebec. In view of the expectation of the early passage of the McDonald bill, however, the prosecution was stopped, and after a long strike, during which many printers left Toronto never to return, the nine-hour conflict was won. In June the day rate of the Typographical Union was stated in the *Ontario Workman* to be \$10 per 54-hour week, with extra for overtime. Twelve principal offices were strictly union, paying this rate to 160 men.

Returning now to other activities in connection with the nine-hour movement, the progress of events is found to follow much the same course as in other countries, lacking nothing of their thoroughness and enthusiasm. Nine-hour leagues seem to have become general through all the chief towns of Ontario by the spring of 1872, and Montreal was not behind. Public meetings everywhere reflected the general excitement and fervor. Probably the most significant single event in this connection was a convention held at Hamilton May 3, 1872, which was attended by delegates from nine-hour leagues of Toronto, Hamilton, Brantford, Dundas, and Montreal, and which received pledges of support from many others. A resolution was passed "That we . . . form ourselves into the 'Canadian Labor Protective and Mutual Improvement Association.'" The resolution was supported with argument for the unity and education of workers that would transcend local barriers and enable all workers of the country to co-operate promptly and decisively in all questions affecting them. It proposed to form leagues in all cities, towns, and villages, with reading-rooms and libraries and all facilities suitable to intellectual and social improvement of the worker after hours of labor were over. It appointed officers and provided for annual conventions, but record of its further activities is lacking.

Considered as a whole, however, in relation to its own ob-

jective and apart from its effects on other phases of unionism, the nine-hour movement in Canada must be looked upon as a failure. While there are references to individual firms (notably the Grand Trunk and Great Western railways) accepting the nine-hour feature, it is known that some of the unions were beaten, and the enthusiasm in the various centers gradually waned. Otherwise considered, the movement brought great and lasting values. It was the means for bringing together the disunited forces in Canada and giving them a broad outlook; it introduced them to the use of the legislative weapon, thereafter to play such an important part in labor affairs; and it established unions as a respectable institution in the eyes of the public. How successful the unions were in advertising their own worth and the reasonableness of their demands is illustrated not only by the quality of citizens who pleaded their cause on the platform but also in the split in the lay press of the country, several of the most influential dailies lending their support to the nine-hour appeal.

A development in connection with the nine-hour movement, in order to give it a fuller expression, was the publication of a labor weekly called the *Ontario Workman*. It appeared first during the stress of the Toronto strike, and continued, for a space of three years under the able editorship of Mr. R. S. Williams, to enunciate the views of the Toronto Trades Assembly and the Canadian Labor Union. It was proposed to find financial support for its upkeep through the establishment of a co-operative society, but this proving a failure, it was soon taken over by a firm of practical printers, Williams, Sleeth & McMillan.

*The Canadian Labor Union.*—Several causes contributed to the organization of the Canadian Labor Union, the first effort of labor to form a federation of all the labor unions in the country, and the prototype of the present Trades and Labor Congress of Canada. Prominent among these were the examples afforded by the formation of the national congress in England the year previous, the activities toward centralization in the United

States at the time, the success of city centrals, and the unprecedented growth of unionism in Ontario in the years just passed. But probably ranking as the main reasons should be named (1) the habit of thinking in common and in terms of the wider welfare that came as a result of the activities of the nine-hour movement and the reading of a well-edited labor paper, and (2) the desire to present an organized front for the securing of legislation. The first definite step was taken by the Toronto Trades Assembly when it called a convention to meet at Toronto September 23, 1873. Forty delegates attended this meeting, representing thirty-one locals and fourteen different organizations, while ten other locals sent letters of approval. It is noteworthy that the delegates were all from Ontario, although two of the communications came from the typographical unions at Quebec and Montreal. In fact, the jurisdiction of the so-called Canadian Labor Union, in spite of its efforts to the contrary, never covered much, if any, territory beyond the one province.

The convention unanimously decided to form a permanent organization to be known as the Canadian Labor Union.<sup>33</sup> According to the constitution which was drawn up and adopted at this first congress the objects were declared to be:

<sup>33</sup> The officers for the first year were: president, J. W. Carter, Toronto (Painters' Union); first vice-president, D. J. O'Donoghue, Ottawa (Typographical Union); second vice-president, William Magness, St. Catherines (K.O.S.C.); third vice-president, Isaac Hodgins, Hamilton; secretary, John Hewitt, Toronto (Coopers); treasurer, J. C. McMillan, Toronto (Typographical).

Mr. Carter in 1883 ran for Parliament as an independent in West Toronto, but was defeated by the Conservative candidate, Mr. Clarke. He later drifted out of the regular union movement to become the respected leader of the "Sons of England" in Toronto, the latter being a purely fraternal organization in which he is still active at the date of this writing. Mr. Donoghue, sometimes spoken of as the "father of the Canadian labor movement" played an active part for many years. He became labor's accredited historian and gathered together much material relative to early activities, which unfortunately have been lost. He was the first fair-wage officer of Canada, appointed by Postmaster Mulock previous to the setting up of the Bureau in 1900. He died in 1905 while on a visit to the miners of District 18, British Columbia.

To agitate such questions as may be for the benefit of the working classes, in order that we may obtain the enactment of such measures by the Dominion and Local legislatures as will be beneficial to us, and a repeal of all oppressive laws which now exist. The use of means consistent with honor and integrity, to so correct the abuses under which the working classes are laboring, as to insure to them their just rights and privileges; to use our utmost endeavors to impress upon the laboring classes of this country the necessity of a close and thorough organization. . . .<sup>34</sup>

The constitution provided for annual congresses to be composed of delegates elected by any trade union or other protective organization in Canada, the representation allowed to each being proportioned to membership, one delegate being allowed for each one hundred members or less, with a maximum delegation of three. Another article provided for the issuance of charters to subordinate unions and for revenues, the subordinate being required to pay \$5 for its charter, and 5 cents per quarter for each member. Non-chartered unions sending delegates were taxed 3 cents per member annually. Concerning strikes and lockouts it was provided that the president, when appealed to by a union affected, should "lay the facts by circular before the subordinate unions and various other trade unions of the Dominion, calling upon them for pecuniary assistance sufficient to sustain the labor so striking or on lockout," *provided* he has evidence "that the labor interest has endeavored, by arbitration, to settle the difficulty."<sup>35</sup>

The congress, which was open to the press, operated through a number of committees, among which were Organization, Prison Labor, Imported and Cheap Labor, Arbitration, Hours of Labor, and Legislation and Labor Bureau.

The Committee on Organization brought in a report, adopted by the congress, which, while making no provision for organizers, provided for the distribution of circulars far and wide urging the organization of craft and "amalgamation" locals,

<sup>34</sup> *Labor Gazette*, II, 94.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

and a general connection of all with the Canadian Labor Union, "with a view to solidification and concentration of power."

The Committee on Hours of Labor reported in favor of the nine-hour day with a half-holiday each week. A motion to substitute the eight-hour instead of the nine-hour day came close to success, but after much discussion the original report was adopted by a vote of seventeen to fifteen.

Other resolutions condemned the use of prison labor. Special reference was made to the agreement between the Ontario government and the Canada Car Company, and the importation of foreign workers under contract involving lower wages than those paid in Canada. An amendment to the latter denouncing the practice of spending money for immigration purposes was lost.<sup>36</sup>

The Committee on Legislation and Labor Bureau recommended "the repeal of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1872, the enactment of a more stringent apprenticeship law, the abrogation of the 'contract system' in connection with the management of Dominion and provincial prisons, a law to prevent employment of children under ten years of age in factories, mills, etc., where machinery is used, the enactment of a just and equitable lien law and finally that the Dominion legislature be petitioned to 'create a Bureau of Labor and Statistics. . . .'"<sup>37</sup>

But in spite of this splendid beginning and the policies for which it stood, the Canadian Labor Union was destined to shrink and pass out within three years through the collapse of the structure upon which it was based and from which it drew its support. A second convention held in the parliament buildings at Ottawa was able to assemble only sixteen delegates, and a third at St. Catherines in August, 1875, had to carry on business with a bare quorum. The secretary, in his report at Ottawa, contended he had done his part in circularizing all the unions in the country,

<sup>36</sup> Its substance was adopted by the convention at Ottawa a year later.

<sup>37</sup> Listed from *Labor Gazette*, II, 94.

but the disturbed state of trade following the panic of 1873 had rendered it futile. The third meeting was given over almost entirely to discussion of proposed legislation. The actual accomplishments of the Canadian Labor Union appear to have been chiefly through its legislative influence. Some of its legislative demands were taken up by its successors. Mr. Coats, in his estimate of it, writes: "On the whole the Canadian Labor Union had a vitality and independence that make its record pleasing. It defined the aims of labor in language that still requires but little modification, and, though it worked in leading strings, its position was consistently sound from a trade union standpoint."<sup>38</sup>

*Description and estimate of the movement in the seventies.*

—Speaking generally of the Canadian labor movement of the seventies, in its main lines it had already assumed the features of the present time. By the middle of the decade a majority of the progressive locals were tied up with American internationals, either by way of affiliation of formerly independent societies, or through owing their birth directly to American organizers. But while the American influence had stamped itself upon them through the manner of their organization, it was the British unionism that provided them with precedent, with point of view, and to a large degree with method. We have noted their use of the English example in turning to parliament for legislation. In fact McDonald's chief argument before the House in introducing the bill of 1872 was that Old Country mechanics should not be subject to restriction in Canada from which they had been freed at home. The nine-hour movement took its lead from England, as is indicated from numerous editorials and from correspondence printed from time to time in the *Ontario Workman* as well as from references in the public speeches delivered in connection with the printers' strike in Toronto. In many instances the implied charge—that Canadian unionists were following the Ameri-

<sup>38</sup> R. H. Coats, *Labor Movement of Canada*, "Canada and Its Provinces" series, Vol. IX, 299.

cans in their eight-hour drive—was repudiated in utterances to the public, and at the Toronto session of the Canadian Labor Union, as already noted, the advocates of the eight-hour day were beaten. English and Scotch ideas, moreover, and in some measure English and Scotch leadership, predominated at the union meetings. Old Country men seem to have become unpopular with the employers, and, in some cases, even dismissed as bearers of unwelcome doctrines and breeders of discontent.

Another characteristic of the period was that it was one of bright hope for the future of labor. To the enthusiasm that normally accompanies the youth of a movement when it reaches out in the first glow of self-consciousness the Canadian movement added a touch of idealism that has not been equaled since, save at the hands of the Knights of Labor. Compared to the disillusioned and more business-like outlook of the present, it viewed itself as a movement making directly for the educational and social uplift of the worker and the advance into a fuller life by the laboring classes. The nine-hour day was demanded, not as an enabling device to make work for all, as was argued for it later, but as a means to better citizenship through more leisure and recreation. The laborer was to participate in the benefits made possible by an age of improvement. The shorter day was “not a local question, but a question of humanity.”

Nor was this the only way to betterment. John Hewitt, speaking at Hamilton in 1872, declared that along with the long working day a second main block in the way of labor realizing itself was “the power which gave the monetary system of the civilized world power to accumulate and centralize the wealth produced by the working classes.” This was “a gigantic fraud that was the father of many frauds.”<sup>39</sup> And Mr. Williams, writing editorially in the first issue of the *Workman*, argues in this connection: “While all the united energies of labor in this country can only show an annual increase of about 5 per cent . . .

<sup>39</sup> *Ontario Workman* (May 9, 1872).

we pay for the measure of value, the convenience used to facilitate labor in producing this increase, at the rate of 7 per cent." The power of money to accumulate, he continues, must be brought "more in accordance with the natural increase of production." For at present "it not only absorbs all surplus production but robs the laborer of 4 per cent that naturally is his subsistence money."<sup>40</sup>

Reform policies advocated were: opposition to the creation of monopolies, a thorough system of state education, the advance and support of legislative reforms irrespective of party, development of the co-operative principle which some of the leaders expected to "gradually supersede the present system, as the present has superseded the serf system of the past," and finally "the more general adoption of the system of arbitration in trade disputes—seeing that it has worked so well in Great Britain—instead of strikes as hereofore."<sup>41</sup> It will be remembered that the Canadian Labor Union in 1874 was still insisting that arbitration be attempted by the labor interest before it would lend its machinery to the support of any subordinate on strike.

Such, in brief, were the aims and hopes of the unionists of the seventies and the methods by which they looked to see them realized; but the picture of the movement would hardly be complete were one to fail to record yet another characteristic of the time, and that is the dignity and the constraint with which new powers were borne. That philosophy and code of values so widely characteristic of English-speaking workmen of the Victorian age was a part of the mentality of the leaders. While they were politically minded and nourished decided opinions regarding equality and human rights, they were nevertheless respectful of culture and aimed to grace the advance of the workmen, and in some degree to gain it, by virtue of an inward and outward expression of their intellectual and social worth. Perhaps no bet-

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* (April 18, 1872).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

ter illustration of this can be given than to quote the last statement of Mr. Carter's opening address at the assembling of the delegates to the Canadian Labor Union in 1873, when he said: "In conclusion, I urge upon you the necessity of being wise and moderate in your deliberations and enactments, and let those who are watching your movements at this first Canadian labor congress be compelled to admit that we are honest, earnest, and prudent workers."<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> D. J. O'Donoghue, in *Annual Report of Bureau of Industries of Ontario for 1886*, p. 70.

## CHAPTER II

### PERIOD 1880-1902

#### I. INDUSTRIAL BACKGROUND

In the period 1880-1902 Canada was taking on industrially much of its present complexion and arrangement. The prairies, opened up at last to direct communication, began to increase rapidly in wheat production, and Winnipeg was forging ahead as a railway center. British Columbia, now connected with the rest of the country by the Canadian Pacific Railway, was opening up coal and metal mines and developing its lumbering and fishing industries. In the far North gold had been discovered in the Yukon. Victoria, Vancouver, New Westminster, Nelson, and Dawson City were becoming important urban centers and affording opportunities for the building trades. The oriental invasion of the coast was assuming dangerous proportions after the restrictive legislation by the United States in 1889; and the Chinese problem constituted for many years a most exciting contribution to federal, as well as to provincial, politics. Meanwhile, as wooden ship-building declined in importance, coal mining went forward in Nova Scotia, small companies being drawn together to form larger ones until by 1902 two or three corporations controlled the greater part of the field. New Brunswick was now crossed by the lines of two separate transportation systems, and Moncton had become the seat of the Intercolonial Railway shops. Backed by tariff protection, manufacturing developed greatly, especially in Ontario and to a lesser degree in Quebec and Nova Scotia. Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Montreal, London, and St. Catherines were all becoming important industrial cities. Quebec City was rivaling Montreal in the manufacture of leather goods, while in the maritime prov-

inces the steel industry was getting under way at Sydney and New Glasgow, and Amherst was becoming an important center in car-building, engineering, and shoe manufacturing. Taken as a whole, the most striking manufacturing developments of the time were those in woodworking, hardware, machinery, rolling stock for railways, and the clothing industry. Operating as a co-ordinating agency and enabling the manufacturing interest to assert itself effectively in both industry and politics was the youthful Canadian Manufacturers' Association.

Industry, however, did not have a path of smooth and even progress. To some degree in the eighties, but much more in the middle nineties, the depressions of the neighboring republic were reflected upon the younger Canadian manufactures. The ill-effects of the resultant restriction of output and unemployment were intensified by the incoming tide of immigration.<sup>1</sup>

Population for the Dominion increased from 4,324,810 in 1881 to 4,833,239 in 1891, while a decade later it stood at 5,371,315. In the period 1881-91 the percentage of urban population rose from 21.1 to 28.7.

## II. EXPANSION OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT DURING THE EIGHTIES

With the return of prosperity after the depression following 1873 came a revival in the labor movement throughout Canada, organization proceeding, as already started a decade earlier, on three different levels, viz., through the formation of branch locals, city trades councils (or district assemblies), and a national congress.

<sup>1</sup> Not only the federal but also most of the provincial governments continued to expend large sums in advertising and assisting the passage of the new settler, the Dominion government making an expenditure of nearly half a million in 1884, but easing off to \$300,000 in 1886. Ontario, which spent \$160,000 in 1873, had yielded to the importunities of organized labor to the extent of reducing this figure to \$16,000 in 1886. The same province, it should be noted, while it received fully two-thirds of the British immigrants in the seventies, accounted for less than half that proportion in the eighties. See *Report of Ontario Bureau of Industries*, 1887, p. 66.

Referring for the present to unionism only, as distinguished from the Knights of Labor development, there is a definite forward movement in the building trades in the early eighties embracing practically all branches and extending to Halifax as well as covering the leading cities of Quebec and Ontario. So also the cigar-makers opened branches in Montreal, Hamilton, and St. Catherines; the Provincial Workmen's Association began its career among the miners of Nova Scotia; and the printing trades made a few additions. Then came a lull for a time, to be followed by a greater expansion after 1885. Taking the decade of the eighties as a whole and covering only organizations that lasted over the end of the century, upward of a hundred locals were added to those that survived the long depression. Their geographical distribution is interesting as indicating the expansion of industry with the development of transportation. The West seems to have taken to the trade-union idea almost from the beginning. By provinces, the distribution of the new unions was as follows: Ontario, 51; Quebec, 19; British Columbia, 10; Manitoba, 5; maritime provinces, 21; Northwest territories, 3.

The distribution by trades is likewise instructive, bringing out as it does into what lines the chief industrial efforts of Canada were pressing at this period. Out of a total of 109 locals, 52 were organized in the transport trades, 26 in the building trades, some half-dozen among the coal miners, 4 in the tobacco industry, and a start was made in the metal trades, the clothing industry, and among the barbers and public employees. The great bulk of organization came as additions to the international unions, exceptions being the coal miners of Nova Scotia, some of the building-trades organizations in the East, the clothing trades, and public employees. The foremost organizations numerically or in point of influence at the end of 1887, according to a commentator of the time, were the Typographical Union, the Bricklayers, the Iron-Molders, Cigar-Makers, the American

Brotherhood of Carpenters, and the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners of Great Britain.<sup>2</sup>

More impressive, however, than the expansion of craft unions during this decade was the advent and rise of the Knights of Labor. Beginning with their first local assembly in 1881 at Hamilton, the Knights were destined within the next few years to play a rôle in the labor movement in Canada scarcely less spectacular than that played on the larger stage south of the boundary. When the organization was at its height in Canada in the later eighties it probably embraced 250 locals, drawn together in seven district assemblies. It seems to have been favored with an unusual response from the French workers of Quebec, where it received a large measure of encouragement from the clergy. Its conquests, however, were by no means confined to one province. The district assembly at Toronto is said to have included no less than forty locals, that at Hamilton twenty-five, while Ottawa somewhat later became one of its most influential centers, and the order had some following in the maritime provinces. Concerning its spread in Montreal, the local historian tells how the Knights "were supported by the most catholic lecturers and distinguished clergy, who recognized the justice of their demands, invited the workers to join and group themselves to achieve these ends, employing always constitutional means." From the first they received great attention from the press, and though "some papers were hostile, especially those directed by men who saw in the organization the ill-starred work of free-masonry," *La Presse*, the leading paper in French Canada, and others, battled consistently in their favor. Beginning with the dominion assembly in 1882, they soon had 40 lodges and 16,000 members.<sup>3</sup>

The first Canadian locals seem to have followed trade lines, but the year 1883 marks the genesis of mixed assemblies and the

<sup>2</sup> D. J. O'Donoghue, in *Report of Ontario Bureau of Industries* (1887), p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> *Souvenir de la Fête du Travail* (Montreal, 1906).

beginnings of easy admission to large numbers who otherwise would have failed to become a part of the labor movement. The presence of the Knights, moreover, meant the practice of dual organization, many trade unionists being also members of the order.

### III. CHANGES DURING THE NINETIES

Coming to the nineties and continuing the analysis along similar lines, we find the Knights, after indulging in a spirited expansion in the region of Ottawa in 1893 and 1894, falling away rapidly thereafter and figuring as an obstruction rather than an effective constructive force in the Canada Trades and Labor Congress by the end of the century. Some attempt there was, however, to revive the order, even then, no less than ten branches being organized in Montreal, Hamilton, Kingston, and Toronto in the years 1899-1902. At this time they were also making a bid for favor among the coal miners of Nova Scotia. At the end of 1901 there were in all Canada only twenty-four local branches and three district assemblies, the locals being distributed as follows: Montreal, 9; Quebec City, 6; Toronto, 6; and Ottawa, Kingston, and Hamilton, each 1. Some of the Quebec locals were still active as late as 1910.

It is interesting to speculate on the reasons for the continuance of the Knights of Labor in a condition of comparative prosperity and influence in Canada for years after they had sunk into decadence in the United States. Not the least of these is found in the fact that the Canada Trades Congress essayed for a considerable time to play the rôle of peacemaker between what otherwise would have been warring elements. Lying deeper than this, perhaps, was the fact that the internationals and the American Federation of Labor (which latter after 1886 began its policy of offering such wide autonomous powers to the bodies organizing under it as effectually to undermine the more centralized Knights) did not succeed in covering Canada at an early date. Especially was this true of the Province of Quebec,

an area which even to the present, in spite of strenuous organizing endeavors, has failed in large measure to open its heart to the business unionism offered by the internationals. The interesting idealism of the Knights, however, expressing itself in a many-sided attack on concentrated wealth in the interests of laboring and middle classes alike, made its appeal at once. Its emphasis upon the education of its membership through ritual and debate, its hope in political action, in co-operation, arbitration, and in land and money reform (methods directly hostile to no one except in the last instance the bankers), and finally the inclusiveness of organization (the assemblies providing a forum where general workers and men of the soil as well as machinists and printers could air their theories of industrial betterment), all these features equipped it to do a work for which the international unions, either by virtue of their job-conscious exclusiveness or by reason of opposition from employer, priests, and farmer to the strike weapon, were not fitted.

Among the trade unions the decade 1890-1900 resembled the seventies and the eighties in that the years of most rapid organization were at the beginning and the end, dropping to a low ebb in the depression period of 1893-97. The total of new unions organized during the ten years was 263, the year 1899 being responsible for a disproportionately large fraction of the whole. Except for rapid advance in British Columbia, the proportion of this growth furnished by the various provinces was not greatly different from the situation of the previous decade, Ontario being accountable for about half the total. The distribution by trades, however, shows considerable change, the metal-engineering group breaking even with transportation in Ontario for first place, with the building trades coming third. In the West, transportation was still of course far in the lead, although mining was beginning to be organized in British Columbia, while Winnipeg, Vancouver, Victoria, and Dawson City were develop-

ing into important centers of organization in the building and metal trades and in general labor. In Quebec the greatest advance was in the clothing group, notably in the boot-and-shoe industry of Montreal and Quebec, while in the maritime provinces transportation was easily the leader.

The greatest boom that the trade-union movement had had in Canada came with the industrial prosperity and rising prices just at the close of the century. Tables in the *Labor Gazette* illustrative of the growth of organization in the different provinces show that in a space of less than four years, beginning in 1899, the total number of unions in the country more than doubled.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the most striking feature of this advance was the tendency for organization to spread over almost the whole area of urban industry. Among the prominent new groups affected were the woodworking and furnishing (which in the single year 1900 organized seventeen branches in Ontario), clothing, food-preparation, tobacco, barbers, public employees, mining, and general labor, the last-named being a heavy gainer all over the country. At the end of July, 1902, there were in Canada 1,078 locals, distributed by provinces as follows: Ontario, 547; British Columbia, 161; Quebec, 151; Nova Scotia, 73; New Brunswick, 49; Manitoba, 46; Prince Edward Island, 16; and territories, 35.<sup>5</sup> We find for the whole country the transport group coming first with 304 branches, strong everywhere, but especially so in Ontario, New Brunswick, and the West; second, the building trades with 171, their strength naturally centered in the chief towns and cities; and third, the metal-engineering and ship-building group (including iron-molders, machinists, electrical workers, blacksmiths, sheet-metal workers, and boiler-makers) with 142. After these, at some distance, came the clothing, printing, woodworking, general labor, and mining groups.

<sup>4</sup> *Canada Labor Gazette*, Vol. III.

<sup>5</sup> The figures include some twenty-five branches of Knights of Labor.

## IV. SECONDARY BODIES

It is to Toronto that we must turn again for the second start in the organization of city centrals. Memories of the old Trades Assembly and its proud record of the early seventies were not dead. Many of the men who had taken part in its meetings were only biding their time until a favorable turn in events would make reorganization for common action possible. The opportunity came when in June, 1881, the International Typographical Union held its annual convention in Toronto. Taking advantage of the enthusiasm pervading the city, these men called a public meeting of the workers and organized the Toronto Trades and Labor Council, which, by virtue of the work accomplished and its general influence, was destined to become the most important delegate body of its kind in Canada. Being located in the same city as the provincial government, it has been in a position to be an ever present force in legislative lobbying, as well as an influence in municipal affairs. In 1883, with the object of keeping the forces of labor united, it extended membership rights to the Knights of Labor, although in this council more than anywhere else have been bred and fostered the policies that have saved the main labor movement of Canada to craft unionism. Its steadying hand was ever to the fore against the impatience of the Knights. Years later it was recognized by the leaders of the One Big Union that if their organization was to be a permanent and influential force in the country this stronghold must be won: "All movements break on Toronto."

In Montreal, also, craft unions and lodges of the Knights of Labor endeavored at first to work together. Action taken by local assembly, Ville Marie, resulted in drawing delegates from the two organizations into a common body in 1885; and thus was formed the Trades and Labor Council of Montreal.

Other trades councils formed during the eighties were those of London (1883), Ottawa, Brantford, Hamilton, Vancouver, and Victoria. The Quebec Trades and Labor Council was formed

in 1890, that of Winnipeg in 1894, and that of Halifax in 1898, the last-mentioned being the only one existent in the maritime provinces as late as 1901. By the summer of 1901 there were altogether twenty-five such bodies in existence in Canada, the majority being located in Ontario and British Columbia.

Meanwhile the Knights, organized as their great following was, on an entirely different basis and emphasizing different methods, saw fit to draw away from association with the unions in the city trades councils. At the close of the eighties they had formed their own district assemblies at Montreal (2), Quebec, Toronto, St. Catherines, and St. Thomas. In 1893 they added another at Ottawa.

The city centrals, while serving as an open forum for the discussion of all matters possessing an interest common to the various bodies which compose them, are pre-eminently organizations for watching over and influencing legislation. In municipal affairs they operate directly; in matters pertaining to the Dominion and the provinces they operate largely indirectly through the Trades and Labor Congress.<sup>6</sup>

With their concern centered chiefly in legislative endeavor, and drawing their strength from a definite geographical area, it is natural that the trades councils should have been the agencies through which organized labor attempted to achieve direct political representation. The Toronto Trades Council, especially, was during the period 1880-1902 very persistent in such efforts. In 1883 it placed two candidates in the field, one in East and one in West Toronto, both seeking election to the provincial legisla-

<sup>6</sup> The larger councils, however, enter into direct relations with the provincial legislatures, and that of Toronto also sends its own delegations to Ottawa. On such occasions the activities of the councils, however, are generally supplementary to those of the congress, unless they happen to be dealing with some question affecting in particular their own local area. Thus, by way of accomplishing a more effective division of labor, the congress left it to the Toronto council in 1901 to press upon the ministers at Ottawa the wishes of labor with respect to union-label legislation.

ture. Failing on this occasion, it appeared again in support of two others in 1886, and in addition one for the Dominion House of Commons, only to meet with general defeat. Once more it tried in 1894 for the Ontario House, and failed. At Ottawa, in which with its environs there were at the time upward of 100 labor organizations, including unions and Knights' assemblies, J. W. Patterson, president of the Trades Council, came within 300 votes of being elected to the House of Commons in 1891. At Montreal one or two labor candidates did succeed in securing a place in municipal politics, and one success in the larger field is recorded in Lincoln County, Ontario.<sup>7</sup> These defeats of the eighties were in a sense redeemed at the close of the period with which we are dealing by political successes in the West.<sup>8</sup>

This period was also to mark the beginnings of another type of secondary bodies which had for their concern the affairs of the unions in closely allied trades or industries and were composed of delegates from these exclusively. For the most part these, too, are local in their jurisdiction. Such were the Federated Council of the Building Trades of Toronto, founded in 1886;

<sup>7</sup> Were these political efforts failures in a complete sense? Those who were responsible for them at the time still say, "No; the political drive of the eighties and nineties was not mistaken; it fell short of its mark because of lack of education in the unionist ranks, and on account of the old political parties getting agents at work within the trades councils. These weaknesses," they argue, "could have been remedied, and if attention had been given to developing in this way as the country grew industrially, the workers would be getting more of what they want at the present time."

<sup>8</sup> Ralph Smith, of the Miners' Union of Nanaimo, and president of the Canada Trades and Labor Congress, was elected, first to the British Columbia legislature, and, following a resolution by the Winnipeg congress in 1900 that "his abilities should be exercised in the larger field of Dominion politics" where "his services would be of incalculable benefit to the Dominion of Canada," he resigned to become a successful candidate for the federal House, running on the Independent Labor ticket. A second victory was secured by organized labor in the election to the House of Commons of A. W. Puttee, of the Typographical Union No. 191 of Winnipeg, and editor of the *Peoples' Voice*, the official organ of the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council. Mr. Puttee did good service for organized labor for two terms at Ottawa.

the Allied Printing Trades Council of the same city, founded in 1895; building trades councils at Ottawa and Kingston, a Woodworkers' Council, and a Federated Metal Trades Council at Toronto, all formed in 1901. Just at the close of the century, District Association No. 6 of the Western Federation of Miners was organized at Nelson, British Columbia. An extended treatment of the activities of the Provincial Workmen's Association, which operated among the coal miners of Nova Scotia throughout this whole period, is given in another place (see pp. 81 ff.).

#### V. CANADA TRADES AND LABOR CONGRESS

It soon became apparent, because of the industrial development and especially because of the linking of large capital interests by means of the corporate principle, that labor organized on a local basis did not fully meet the needs of the case. Largely through the activities of the Toronto Trades and Labor Council, a new national congress was formed and placed upon a permanent footing. A call was sent out late in 1883 by the Toronto council to all labor organizations in Canada, both trade unions and Knights of Labor assemblies, inviting them to send delegates to Toronto during Christmas week, the circular letter stating that it had not been deemed "advisable to lay down a program for guidance, believing that the exigencies of the time, coupled with past experience, . . . [would] readily suggest the questions which should . . . receive that prompt and unmistakable consideration which their gravity demanded."<sup>9</sup> The outcome was a convention lasting four days, composed entirely, however, of delegates from points in Ontario. Although many weighty subjects were dealt with during the session, no permanent organization was provided for at this time, the meeting adjourning "until called to meet again by the Trades and Labor Council of Toronto." Not until 1886 did the latter body see fit

<sup>9</sup> D. J. O'Donoghue, in *Toronto Labor Day and Trade and Labor Congress Souvenir*, 1905.

to act in accordance with the power thus conferred upon it. This time the meeting was held in September, again at Toronto, and among the 109 delegates present was one from outside the province, representing a local assembly of the Knights of Labor of Quebec City.

At this convention a permanent organization was effected under the name of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada. The congress, according to its constitution, was to embrace the various organizations of both Knights of Labor and trade unions, the basis of representation being as follows: "Trade unions and Knights of Labor assemblies, composed of 200 members and under, one delegate; over 200 and under 400, two delegates; over 400, three delegates; trades and labor councils, district assemblies, and central labor unions, three delegates." The figures for the primary bodies were changed the next year to allow a delegate for each one hundred members instead of two hundred, the representatives from secondary bodies remaining as before.

In this way the Canada Trades Congress began its work, operating through its annual conventions, with its executive committee carrying out the will of the larger body in the intervals between. At no time has it been representative of the entire body of Canadian organized labor, although until 1902 it aspired to include all unions and assemblies. Its policy until that date was to prevent, if possible, any disruption in the ranks of labor, and its success in holding together two such diverse and opposed elements as the Knights of Labor and the trade unions, the latter largely affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, does credit to the diplomacy of its leadership.<sup>10</sup> Even after the Berlin

<sup>10</sup> The attitude of the congress from the beginning was that the two organizations, by virtue of their different appeals and constituencies, were complementary. As expressed by President March in 1883, "between the two bodies antagonism should not, and . . . does not, exist, and between them no section or class of wage-earners need be without organization and consequent protection." That the strain was great at different times, however, is evident from the wide divergence in the spirit of different resolutions passed upon at the conventions.

convention which effected the separation in 1902, D. J. O'Donoghue, writing in the hope that the great error would yet be corrected by bringing the forces together again, was probably expressing the sentiment of a considerable number of those who had the interest of the whole very much at heart. During the later eighties the two organizations were probably about equally represented in the conventions, and as late as 1894 the Knights were able to carry through constitutional amendments making provision in some measure for the active organizing and expansion policies which they favored. About this time, although the step was strongly opposed, representation rights were extended to sections of the Socialist Party of Canada, to the Industrial Brotherhood,<sup>11</sup> to "federal labor unions" chartered directly by the congress, as well as to the executive of the Patrons of Industry—a body which had achieved considerable success in the rural districts of Ontario. An examination of the reports, however, indicates that none of these organizations greatly affected the personnel of the conventions. With the increasing dominance of the trade-union point of view, they were—with the exception of the federal unions—all dropped before the end of the century, the Socialist party being excluded after one year.

Some idea of the extent of the operations of the Canada Trades Congress is to be had from the following figures: At the Hamilton convention of 1887 (the first at which representation was placed on the basis of the figures given earlier) there were 45 delegates representing 33 different organizations; at Montreal in 1889 there were 83 delegates from 47 bodies, of which 5

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Doubtless the breach was delayed thus long largely through consciousness of the impotence of labor in confronting the legislatures in two divisions, and with differing demands.

<sup>11</sup> The Industrial Brotherhood was an organization, confined mostly to London, Ontario, active chiefly in social reform and educative endeavors, under the leadership of one Joseph Marks. It served also as a recruiting agency and provided a basis for organized activity for those mechanics and laborers whose trades had no unions in the city.

were trades and labor councils and 5 district assemblies. The convention at Ottawa in 1890 was the high-water mark of the earlier period, numbering 90 delegates from 62 organizations. From this high point the meetings fell off until at London, in 1895, the number of delegates was reduced to 39, these representing only 27 bodies. In 1901, out of a total of 871 labor bodies in Canada, 736 were not affiliated with the congress.<sup>12</sup> With the twentieth century came rapid expansion, the secretary's report of 1902 showing 212 affiliated unions with a membership of 13,465.<sup>13</sup>

Geographically, the congress was, until 1889 when it held its convention in Montreal, for all practical purposes an Ontario organization; and down to the end of the century its meetings were composed largely of delegates from the two provinces, Quebec and Ontario. Although two or three representatives came from the Pacific coast in the early nineties, and although Vancouver Island contributed a popular president for several years (1898-1902) in the person of Ralph Smith, M.P., the distance proved a barrier to direct contact, and the affairs of the coast were dealt with by the congress on the basis of correspondence between it and the trades councils of Victoria and Vancouver. Likewise, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island sent no representatives before 1901, and Manitoba and the Northwest took little part before the holding of the convention at Winnipeg in 1898. It is worthy of note in this connection that this matter of distance, with the preponderance of conventions held in the East, thus preventing the western organizations from hav-

<sup>12</sup> The small percentage is explained in part by the attitude of the railway brotherhoods, which have never seen fit to affiliate with the congress. Contrasting with these figures as an index of the comparative membership of the congress at the beginning and end of the nineties are those of the financial receipts, which show an amount in 1900 double of that in 1890. The basis of taxation, however, was not rigidly set.

<sup>13</sup> *Labor Gazette*, III, 234.

ing a fair representation in the congress, was avowedly a foremost reason for the separatist action of the West in 1919.

Unlike its prototype, the Canadian Labor Union, which provided constitutionally for organizing activities, charter issuing, and the lending of its services for the operation of legitimate and necessary strikes, the Trades Congress was dedicated in the beginning, so far as specific mention was concerned, to a single line of activity. Clause 2 of Article I stated: "It has for its purpose the uniting of all labor organizations in order to work for the passage of new laws or amendments to existing laws, in the interest of those who have to earn their living, as well as to insure at the same time the well-being of the working class." For a time this line of action appears to have been deemed sufficient, at least so far as constitutional provision was concerned. But with the oft-repeated failure to get results through legislative lobbying in the early nineties, a large element of the congress, led by the Knights of Labor, became impatient and declared for a wider range of activities and a more direct road to obtaining the ends of labor. At the convention at Ottawa in 1894,<sup>14</sup> composed of twenty-seven delegates of trade unions and twenty-six from Knights of Labor organizations, Messrs. Darlington and Metcalfe (both of the Montreal Knights) made the following motion:

It being proven that this Congress has outlived its usefulness, through its incapacity to obtain even a fraction of justice from the Federal and provincial governments; be it resolved that before its adjournment this congress be reconstructed on a system in accord with the ideas of the age, and which may permit it to grant charters for the organization of workers' societies in no matter what branch of workers, to the end that at all times we may be in a position to concentrate our forces for the political battle, being

<sup>14</sup>It should be noted that the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council two years earlier in its report to the congress had asked that a labor platform be promulgated by a labor party, formed for the purpose of electing as many members as possible to the various governmental bodies. Congress referred the matter to the Executive Committee for consideration and later report.

convinced that to petition governments for reforms is a loss of time, and that it is, only by independent political action, like that of the Socialist Workers Party, that we will obtain the measure of justice that we have so long sought.<sup>15</sup>

A second measure introduced by Messrs. Patterson and Legge (Knight and unionist, respectively), of Ottawa, in similar vein demanded the formation of a "Canadian association with full powers of organizing, granting charters, levying taxes, and performing any other duties pertaining to a National Union." It emphasized the idea of a purely Canadian organization, called for the enunciation of a code of political principles, and proposed the appointment of a committee to suggest the necessary amendments to the constitution. Both motions were adopted, and the committee, headed by Mr. D. A. Carey, recommended that the constitution be amended so as "to permit the granting of charters and the fulfilling of all other duties pertaining to a National Association," and that the incoming executive be charged with preparing the necessary amendments and submitting its report to the various workers' organizations for their approval.

The result was the addition of two clauses to the constitution making it a purpose of the congress "to form organizations in localities where they do not now exist whether of local unions or assemblies of the Knights of Labor; but in no case may it grant charters to any body of workers belonging to any trade or profession having a national or international union now in existence." Unions so organized by the congress were to be called "federal labor unions" and were to hold meetings at least once a month. It will be seen at once that the changes did not go as far as the movers of the two resolutions apparently intended toward the setting up of a national body with exclusive authority. This fact is further accentuated by the provision that in the event of the formation of an international or national union in the trade

<sup>15</sup> *Proceedings of Tenth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress.*

or calling in which such a federal union had been organized, "it will be the duty of the proper officers of the congress to see that the said union becomes a member of the said international or national union." Under the new arrangement the federal unions paid a larger per capita tax than those that were responsible for dues to international and national bodies.

Beyond this action the aspirations of those who sought to make the congress an organization for independent political action were destined to be blighted. Although the Executive Committee went on record as being of the opinion that the results of the years just passed "showed fully the futility of our efforts to obtain any legislation by present methods, and that the working classes should unite upon independent political action," little seems to have been done. All the constitutional authority given for such activity lay in the blanket clause already present in 1894, viz., that which authorized the congress "to formulate and discuss all questions of interest to the cause of labor, and to further by all honorable means the welfare of the working classes."<sup>16</sup>

It is noteworthy that the center of the political actionists during the later years of the century shifted unmistakably to the newly organized West. British Columbia, in particular, dissatisfied with the failure of the congress to get results at Ottawa, was calling at one time for an independent labor party, at another for a "progressive party," to be composed of labor unionists and reformers. Meanwhile, in a vote on whether or no the congress was justified in taking steps to further independent political action, the chief dissenting opinion came from Montreal, the Knights of Labor voting almost solidly against it.<sup>17</sup>

The machinery by which the congress has sought to carry its resolutions into effect has varied from time to time. As early

<sup>16</sup> The influence of the example of the American Federation of Labor was important in counteracting political programs.

<sup>17</sup> *Proceedings of Sixteenth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 18-22.

as 1890, in view of the legislative lobbying to be carried on at Quebec, Ontario, and Ottawa, there had been provided, in addition to the president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer, an executive committee composed of three chief directors and of three for each of these provinces. Shortly after this the chief directors were dropped, the so-called "parliamentary committee" being composed of six members, three acting as a subcommittee for each province, and uniting with the officers to treat in a body with the Dominion ministers. It became the custom at this time to keep one member, usually the president, at Ottawa during the session to work for the labor interest. At this time, too, the procedure was adopted of securing copies of any measures concerning labor that were coming up for their first reading and sending them to different organizations with the understanding that they were to be submitted to the membership and that petitions registering the attitude of each body should be drawn up and signed as widely as possible and forwarded to the appropriate parliamentary representatives at Ottawa.

While only two provinces were at first concerned, the provision was made that "Congress should have power at any session, by a vote of the majority, to name three other members as a parliamentary committee for any or each of the other provinces of the Dominion." Under this clause such committees were named for Manitoba and British Columbia, beginning in 1895. By 1901 New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island had also their subcommittees, and the clause in the constitution had been changed to read: "There shall . . . be elected a legislative Committee from each province of the Dominion." A further change had added a vice-president for each province, in addition to the chief vice-president, the provincial vice-presidents to be the responsible organizers in their respective territories. By this unostentatious and pragmatic process the Trades Congress adapted its machinery to changing requirements in a manner consistent with the traditions of British in-

stitutions and largely satisfactory to the different sections of the country.

#### VI. LEGISLATION SOUGHT BY THE CANADA TRADES AND LABOR CONGRESS

With the foregoing points in mind concerning the conflicting elements struggling for mastery within the congress, it will be profitable to examine in some detail the nature of its resolutions in convention and the legislation it sought to promote (or avert) at the hands of the various parliamentary bodies.<sup>18</sup>

A comparison of resolutions year after year shows many on the same topics appearing again and again with greater or less variation in content according to the conditions, it being the expressed policy of the congress to carry forward all measures of earlier sessions in respect to which legislation was not accomplished. In general it may be said that the scope of the measures dealt with during the first few years, though comprehensive, was not extravagant;<sup>19</sup> that following this not immodest beginning it

<sup>18</sup> In this connection it is necessary to note the division of authority between the federal and the provincial governments. In general, legislation with regard to civil rights is matter for the provincial legislatures, while laws relating to peace and order are the responsibility of the Dominion Parliament. On the subject of immigration jurisdiction is concurrent, but in the main federal authority is supreme. The criminal law also is a Dominion matter. More specifically, this means that such problems as the prevention of conspiracy, intimidation and violence, illegal boycotting, and the excluding of undesirable aliens fall within the power of the Dominion Parliament; while factories acts, mines regulations acts, workmen's compensation acts, and most acts regulating contracts between employers and employees are subjects for the provinces, as also is education. Both federal and provincial governments have provided machinery for dealing with industrial disputes. For plural legislative authority in Canada, cf. R. H. Coats, *Labor Legislation in Canada*, "Canada and Its Provinces" series, IX, 339.

<sup>19</sup> The principal questions dealt with by the first convention were the following: Chinese immigration, shorter hours of labor, assisted European immigration, laws respecting factories, affecting seamen, property qualification in voting, manhood suffrage, the land question, the organization of trades councils, the insolvency law, cumulative voting, extension of magistrate's power respecting the wages of employees, land grants, tax exemptions, government aid to colleges, or-

expanded for a time into wider fields and gave vent to expressions of opinion on matters which in the earlier period it would not have considered as its responsibility; and still later it reverted to its original position, equipped with experience and more effective machinery. There follows a consideration of a few of the more outstanding resolutions.

One of the resolutions of the first convention requested "that stipendiary magistrates should have summary jurisdiction in all cases of non-payment of wages, where no written agreement is entered into by the parties concerned." Another line of endeavor with a somewhat similar purpose that engaged the attention of the congress from time to time had to do with the securing of mechanic's lien acts (or amendments to such acts existing), and other enactments for the safeguarding of wages in cases of assignments, executions, winding up of estates, etc., in the several provinces.

Much consideration was given in the earlier years to securing protective legislation for seamen, factory workers, and railway employees, as well as to secure more satisfactory provisions for compensating workmen for injuries sustained. Beginning with Ontario in 1886, workmen's compensation or employer's liability acts had been secured in four provinces by 1902, and in some cases these had been buttressed with many amendments. Other phases of the same general endeavor sought the enactment of workshops regulation acts looking to the sanitary condition of shops and dwellings where work other than household work was performed, the appointment of competent inspectors (including female inspectors where desirable), and the limitation of child labor, which was found by the federal commissions

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ganization of female labor, pauper immigration, abolition of piece work, boards of arbitration in labor disputes, establishment of a labor bureau, an employer's liability act, etc. Cf. D. J. O'Donoghue, in *Labor Day and Trades and Labor Congress Souvenir* (1905), p. 31.

in the early eighties to be all too prevalent.<sup>20</sup> The demand for examination of stationary engineers and firemen dates from 1890.

In 1887 began a long-continued drive against the "sweating system" with a resolution in regard to the construction of public works or performance of public service, that no tenders should be considered by the various governments from parties "who have at any time during the preceding twelve months paid less than the standard wage in such trade or calling." Subsequently the Dominion militia and post-office departments in their contracts for supplies incorporated a clause prohibiting the subletting of contracts and demanding the payment of the prevailing rate of wages.<sup>21</sup> In 1895, upon a request sent in by Local No. 81 of the United Garment Workers of America, the congress passed a resolution asking the federal government to make investigation to discover the extent to which sweating existed in the cities of Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton, and Ottawa, as a test for all of Canada and with a view to legislating to eliminate the evil.

Apart from endeavors to improve wages and working conditions, the congress took action rather consistently for the reduction of hours. As early as 1887 it advocated an eight-hour day and a five-hour Saturday for workers on all government contracts. An Ontario bill providing for a Saturday half-holiday but with a rider to the effect that any town or village might choose corporately whether to adopt it or not, though indorsed by congress, was characterized as "useless." In the platform of principles, first enunciated in 1898, one of the first planks was a "legal working day of eight hours and six days to the week."

Considerable attention was given from time to time to the

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<sup>20</sup> Investigations in Montreal at this time found intimidation and bodily violence a not uncommon weapon in the relations between master and apprentice. Cf. *Souvenir de la fête du Travail*, 1906. See also *Report of the Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital* (1889).

<sup>21</sup> G. Dower, in *Toronto Trades and Labor Council Souvenir*, 1898.

question of "prison labor" and its unwholesome effect upon the labor market. In 1887 a resolution requested that a special mark should be placed upon prison-made goods for the enlightenment of the consumer. At the Toronto meeting of 1892 a special committee made a lengthy study of the whole question from various angles and brought in a report favoring the "state account" system as the best solution of the problem. The report was adopted.<sup>22</sup>

Following the lead of its predecessor of the seventies, which had made the extension of the voting power one of its leading objectives, the Trades Congress began to agitate from the very first for manhood suffrage. In 1883 it petitioned the government of Ontario to enact such legislation, and was rewarded in 1885 with an act enabling all wage-earners receiving \$250 annually to vote. Three years later the income qualification was eliminated. In 1892 a resolution requested that the suffrage be extended to women upon the same terms as to men. In the earlier years, in its effort to support its own candidates more effectively in the political field, it sought, in addition to this liberalization of the suffrage, the installation of a system of cumulative voting and grouped constituencies whereby labor might concentrate its support behind its candidates, disregarding in some measure the geographical location of the voters. In this matter, however, it met disappointment.

Although the question of the public schools was voted *ultra vires* of the powers of the congress, the 1895 convention passed a resolution asking "that the present system of licensed schools of Quebec be abolished and that the government name a Minister of Education who shall name inspectors who shall have the general superintendence of schools, and that the trade unions be elected in the various localities to examine and see that the Education Act is properly carried out in the different schools for which they shall be responsible." The attempt to pass resolu-

<sup>22</sup> *Report of Ontario Bureau of Industries* (1892), p. 130.

tions in favor of free, non-sectarian schools met with difficulty on account of Quebec. Nevertheless compulsory free education has generally been favored as complementary to child-labor legislation, and in 1898 became a platform plank.

More definite was the evolution in labor's attitude during the period toward technical education and manual training. In 1887 a resolution introduced by Toronto delegates declared "that in every province in which there is a state-supported and state-controlled system of public education, provision should be made by the state for industrial training, not merely in connection with primary and secondary schools, but also, and more especially by the establishment and maintenance of institutions adapted to the instruction of youths in agriculture and the mechanical arts." It being objected that such a system would undermine the position of the unions by equipping students with the same mechanical training as that afforded by regular apprenticeship, the motion was softened by amendment. The following year the position of the congress was better expressed in a new resolution which read, "This Congress while favoring a judicious system of technical education, considers that the system of manual training in our schools, as proposed by the Honorable Minister of Education of Ontario is prejudicial to the interests and welfare of mechanics generally. . . . ." It is noteworthy that this resolution, when it was repeated in substance again at Montreal in 1889, was sturdily combated by Knights' delegates of the latter city who argued that a "broad view" should be taken of the whole subject; and if this were done, it would be realized that manual training in the schools would be beneficial to the working class in the long run. In 1900 the congress went on record again, drawing its distinction favoring

technical schools the purpose of which is the training and education of mechanics, artisans, and wage-earners generally in such subjects as will promote a technical knowledge of the mechanical and manufacturing arts, and

affording instruction in those branches of science and applied arts as are required in the various industrial pursuits of the masses of the people, and specially intended to benefit all engaged in the manufacturing industries; [but] Congress always has been and continues to be vehemently opposed to the introduction or existence in our public educational institutions of any form of industrial or manual training involving the use of tools necessary in the trade, as well as opposed to any form of teaching which embraces the practical knowledge of such trades to the pupils of such educational institutions. . . .<sup>23</sup>

While always favoring the principle of arbitration, the congress appears to have pursued a wavering attitude as to whether or not it approved the compulsory type. A special committee at the 1892 convention found "that it would not be advisable for the present to seek the enactment of compulsory arbitration laws, and would recommend that the labor organizations should meanwhile proceed to form permanent conciliatory boards" involving a three-party personnel. The convention, however, amended the report, declaring in favor of a board of conciliation and arbitration appointed by the government "to be used when possible." In 1894, even though its legislative committee had been pressing for compulsory arbitration at Ottawa, the congress offered its praises to the new Ontario Conciliation and Arbitration Act, not for any thoroughgoing compulsory feature—as none was present—but for its democratic method of appointment, the election of the representative of the workers on the Board being left to the Trades Congress. In 1898 there appeared in the platform of principles the plank, "voluntary arbitration of labor disputes." But in 1900, as a result of action taken at the intervening convention, the congress definitely declared for the compulsory feature, Manitoba especially working for legislation creating compulsory boards. In 1902 the federal Minister of Labor was led to introduce into the House of Commons a measure called the compulsory arbitration bill for the settlement of railway labor disputes, but the sequel was quite

<sup>23</sup> *Proceedings of Sixteenth Annual Session of the Trades and Labor Congress* (1900), p. 26.

different from that anticipated. The railway brotherhoods condemned it utterly, and in fact went on record as opposed to the principle, and the congress, after further study of the matter, was forced to concur in the opinion of the brotherhoods. It immediately proceeded, by a vote of 78 to 12, to pass a resolution of disapproval of a bill which, if enacted, "would rob the railway employees of their constitutional rights, destroy their organizations, and place them absolutely in the hands of railway companies," and promised its best efforts to secure the defeat of the measure.

Later in the session, to bring its declaration of principles into consistency with its action in the particular, the word "voluntary" was substituted for "compulsory" as the qualifying adjective determining the type of arbitration for which it was to stand in the future.<sup>24</sup> Doubtless the change in attitude with regard to compulsory arbitration was influenced by the outspoken denunciation of the principle by President Gompers, of the American Federation of Labor, in his report to the A.F. of L. convention the year previous.

But beyond doubt the subject that was given more attention than any other, taking the period as a whole, was that of immigration. The Canadian Labor Union had protested vigorously in its day against uncontrolled immigration agencies and the bringing in of skilled artisans. Although some change in policy had been made by the Ontario government resulting in betterment for a time, less attention was paid to it elsewhere. The congress, at its first meeting in 1883, found the situation no better than before, and immediately repeated the protest, condemning the immigration system, as it existed, in general. In 1886 a resolution used the quality of the incoming tide as its reason for demanding a change.<sup>25</sup> In 1894 a motion was passed reading:

<sup>24</sup> *Labor Gazette*, III, 235.

<sup>25</sup> It was worded as follows: "Resolved that the continued and systematic expenditure of large sums of public money in assisting and encouraging to this country paupers, indigents and orphans from abroad, is a gross injustice to the

"In view of the fact that the progress of Canada is continually encumbered in mechanical and manual branches, that public assistance in bringing immigrants, as carried on by the Federal Government and by all the provinces except British Columbia be stopped, and that only those who possess capital be encouraged to come." The same convention—marked as it was throughout by an irrepressible activity on the part of the Knights of Labor—recommended, in place of the system used, a plan for the colonization of the crown lands, the expenditures theretofore used in advertisement and in assisting passage to be used to engage the unemployed to clear such lands and to equip a national school of agriculture for the training of such settlers. Another protest entered before the ministers of the governments more than once was against the pecuniary aid in transporting of foreigners to the West when preference should have been given to Canadian citizens.

A phase of the immigration question which, by virtue of the agitation that it caused in labor circles deserves special treatment, was that of "contract labor." The congress repeatedly brought its censure to bear upon this system of human importation calculated to result in the direct undermining of the wage rate. It succeeded in getting a bill before the House of Commons in 1890—the measure being supported by almost every labor body in Canada—but the bill was referred to a select committee with instructions to investigate, and failed of passage at the time. In 1895 we find President Jobin regretting the fact that a certain railway of the country was being built by foreigners and that Italians were replacing Canadians in unloading coal at Montreal. Not until 1898 did any act of the kind suggested find

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people of Canada, and in particular to the working classes: therefore be it resolved that it is the imperative duty of the government to peremptorily abolish the existing immigration system; and that due care should be exercised in preventing the introduction of such classes into Canada, whether they be sent under the authority of the Imperial Government or through any other channel."

place in the Canadian statute books, and then, inasmuch as it was chiefly a retaliatory measure for an alien labor law passed in the United States, it was made to apply only to those countries which had similar legislation affecting Canada.<sup>26</sup>

From the trade councils of Vancouver and Victoria came the cry for help in maintaining the white man's standards of life in British Columbia. In the lengthy reports sent in to the officers of the congress for consideration at the conventions the subject was argued from the social and the moral, as well as the economic, standpoint, it being claimed that "thousands of young men on the coast, who are now wrecks physically and mentally, can lay their ruin to the Chinese who taught them the terrible habit of opium smoking," etc.<sup>27</sup> Economically it was claimed that the Orientals, on account of their night-and-day work, were making existence impossible in certain trades, such as tailoring. Other industries, where their presence had a direct effect upon organized labor, were lumbering, mining, fishing and canning, cigar-making, and laundering.

An act of the Dominion Parliament passed in 1885 imposed a per capita tax of \$50 on every Chinaman entering the country. In 1891 this restriction was declared entirely inadequate by or-

<sup>26</sup> R. H. Coats, *The Labor Movement in Canada*, "Canada and Its Provinces" series, IX, 341. At first the machinery of the act was set in motion only upon the initiative of the attorney-general, and in this way some deportations took place, apparently without process of trial. But, not satisfied with this arrangement, labor asked that the law be amended so as to provide for suit being brought by private individuals. The request was granted, but thereafter the act was interpreted as requiring the government also to secure a conviction in the courts before it might take action. Consequently we find the congress endeavoring to persuade the government in 1902 to place the responsibility for enforcement upon the minister of labor, with the right to utilize his staff officers for the investigation of the facts when any complaint was sent in, and with the power, if he found through these sources that the act had been violated, to take immediate action, the expense of deportation in such cases to be borne by the owners of the vessel bringing the immigrant to Canada.

<sup>27</sup> Letter, Victoria Labor Council, 1890, found in *Proceedings of Sixth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*.

ganized labor on the coast, as well as by the British Columbia legislature. The following year the Vancouver Trades Council, professing, as a result of experience, to entertain no hope of redress from the federal government through the protests of British Columbia acting alone, called upon the congress to form a labor party, one plank of whose platform should be the exclusion of the Chinese after the manner of Australia, or at least the raising of the entrance tax to \$500, with a yearly resident tax of \$200 thereafter.<sup>28</sup> The congress responded with a recommendation of total exclusion and an annual poll tax of \$100 for those now in the country. By 1895 it had changed its ground somewhat and was asking that the head tax be raised to \$500, "in order to save native workers from an unjust competition with a class of human beings who in their actual condition are an injury to every civilized country." In 1900 the government afforded a palliative by increasing the per capita tax from \$50 to \$100, but later overruled a law passed by the British Columbia legislature providing an English-speaking test to be applied to all immigrants landing in the province.<sup>29</sup> In the course of the controversy race prejudice and moral and eugenic issues were strongly stimulated, and the question, reaching far beyond labor politics, stirred the western province to its depths.

Other measures for which the congress strove were the creation of an annual legal holiday on Labor Day, carried to success in 1895; the founding of statistical bureaus under the Dominion and provincial governments; the exemption of trade unions from prosecution for restraint of trade under the Anti-Combines Act; amendment of the Trade Mark and Designs Act to make it include union labels; and an extension of the principle of government ownership.

With respect to the last-named matter, the congress was

<sup>28</sup> Letter to Secretary Dower, 1892, found in *Proceedings of Eighth Annual Convention*.

<sup>29</sup> For review of Dominion legislation, see *Labor Gazette*, I, 509.

probably more aggressive in its earlier career than it was at the end of the century. A resolution adopted in 1890 demanded that the federal government should assume possession of railways, telegraphs, and telephones of the country at a valuation to be made by competent arbitration, whereas a decade later the motion in convention was mild and defensive, asking that the Inter-colonial Railway be retained as a public institution and not sold to a private company, as was threatened. Coexistent with these expressions in favor of this principle in the national field were efforts by various trades and labor councils calling for ownership and operation by the municipalities of gas and electric plants, telephones, and street railways.

Probably the most important accomplishments as a result of efforts directed toward influencing legislation were the various factory and regulatory acts passed in Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia; and, in the Dominion field, the creation of a Department of Labor with the first machinery for settling industrial disputes (1900), and the law against the importation of labor under contract. Among the provincial legislatures that of Ontario led the way in its liberal attitude toward the demands of labor, with the exception perhaps of British Columbia and Nova Scotia in their development of mining laws—in the latter province under the impact of the Provincial Workmen's Association. Generally speaking, Quebec was found unsatisfactory, not only for its failure to lend a ready ear to the pleas of the subcommittee appointed by the congress for the province, but also for its failure to carry out the laws that it did pass through the naming of competent inspectors. Workmen's compensation acts, though enacted in four provinces by 1902, were as yet no great boon to the workers.

#### VII. FURTHER EXPRESSIONS OF THE CONGRESS

Other resolutions passed by the congress from time to time, which afford an index to its spirit and attitude, although they

were not pressed for at the interviews with the ministers of the crown, were such as follows:

a) A resolution that parliament should pass a law making 2 cents per mile a maximum charge per passenger upon all railways in Canada (1894).

b) Numerous resolutions that the governor-general should be elected by popular vote (1887, 1890, etc.).

c) An oft-repeated resolution that the Senate of Canada should be abolished—a measure that was incorporated in 1898 in the platform of principles.

d) Resolutions protesting the subsidizing of railways with money and land grants.

e) The hand of the Knights of Labor is seen in a recommendation of the Executive Committee in its 1895 report condemning the monetary system as unadapted to the needs of the people and chiefly to blame for the industrial depression, and calling for the issue of all money by the government, while relegating the banks entirely to the deposit function. The substance of the recommendation was embodied in a resolution and adopted by the congress.

f) Another way out of the unhappy conditions of the early nineties was sought through changing the system of taxation. In 1892 a motion was made indorsing the principles of Henry George and declaring for complete dependence for government revenue upon a single tax on land. The motion, along with amendments made to it, was ordered printed and forwarded to the labor organizations of the country for their consideration. On the motion of Messrs. O'Donoghue and March, of Toronto, at the 1895 meeting, it was resolved and passed "that the single tax is the only proper system of taxation for public purposes; hence, resolved that Congress declare itself in favor of the same." In 1894, pending the day of the single tax, a resolution was adopted "that inasmuch as the inheritance tax is recognized as a step toward justice: therefore be it resolved that, in the

opinion of Congress, its principle should be extended in a way to provide a progressive system of taxation upon immovable and personal goods." Other efforts were put forth having for their purpose the raising of exemption amounts in connection with provincial income taxes so as to cause taxation to weigh less heavily on the workers, and the abolition of property qualifications for all candidates to public offices.

g) Lastly, there should be mentioned a recommendation to the 1897 convention made by President D. A. Carey and endorsed by the assembled delegates, the substance of which was to be realized in practice only under the force of circumstances arising out of the World War. It involved the creation of a centralized system of government employment bureaus, and ran as follows:

To my mind—and I direct the particular attention of the Congress to the subject—a continued, active and persevering effort should be made through the several subordinate and other labor organizations of the Dominion to secure a system of Federal Government, free employment bureaus throughout the Dominion, at least in the large centers of population. Such a system obviously would be of the greatest possible advantage and convenience to working people at large, and would without doubt be a death blow to the rascally private employment agencies which rob the very poorest and those least able to bear the loss.<sup>30</sup>

#### VIII. DEFINING CANADIAN ORGANIZATION IN CONTINENTAL MOVEMENT

With the beginning of the present century it became increasingly evident that the various forces that were struggling within the congress, often to the confusion of the rank and file, must have a trial of strength, and that Canada's leading labor body must define its position more exactly with reference to the American Federation of Labor, the international unions, the Knights of Labor, and the independent labor organizations in Canada. At the 1901 convention, President Smith, in his open-

<sup>30</sup> Quoted by R. A. Rigg, *Canadian Congress Journal* (February, 1924), p. 10.

ing address, speaking of the need of increasing the usefulness of the congress, recommended a more complete recognition of national lines than that then existing. "A federation of American unions, represented by a National Union, and a federation of Canadian unions, represented by a National Union, each working with the other in special cases, would," he ventured, "be a great advantage over having local unions in Canada connected with the national unions of America." It was his opinion that "greater success would be accomplished in the settlement of disputes in each country if the leaders of each were the representatives of their own national grievances," as "there are such distinctive differences in the condition of each that a presentment of Canadian matters by Canadian leaders, and vice versa, by American leaders, would lead to a greater success and would not in any way prevent a Federation of the national bodies."

The congress did not adopt this part of the presidential address, but referred it to a special committee with instructions to report at the next convention. Meanwhile continued opposition to the principle of internationalism was issuing from the Central Trades and Labor Council of Montreal, while from other parts of the Dominion, notably British Columbia, came protest against the failure of the congress to carry out any active organization campaign in its own name with a view to extending the number of unions holding charter directly from the central Canadian body. The position of the congress was in fact at this time confused. Constitutionally it had for its responsibility the organization and chartering of federal unions wherever they were needed and where no international or national union existed. But during the last few years the American Federation of Labor had begun an active campaign of organization in Canada which did not limit itself to the extension of international bodies. It, also, organized "federal unions." Moreover, at this time there was much difficulty in defining the boundaries of many craft unions. Thus the Freight Handlers' Union of Vancouver was

operating under a charter from the Canada Trades Congress when, in 1902, the organizer for the American Federation of Labor named it as a branch of the Longshoremen's International, much to its dislike. In Prince Edward Island, Federal Union No. 10, the first local established in Charlottetown, suggested to the organizer for the American Federation of Labor, who had recently been organizing some additional unions in the city, that the various local bodies should get together in a trades and labor council. Some days later the officers of the federal union were surprised to learn that the suggestion had been acted upon, that a trades council had been formed under a charter from the American Federation of Labor, but that their body was ineligible because it held its charter from the Canadian congress and did not belong to an international union or the American Federation of Labor. It was quite evident that under this conflicting jurisdiction the labor movement in Canada was rapidly drifting toward division in spite of the attendance of fraternal delegates of each body at the conventions of the other, and the regular exchange of felicitations between the congress and the American Federation of Labor. What seemed the greatest anomaly of all to those who were ambitious for the growth of a Canadian movement directly chartered by the Canadian body was the fact that the first vice-president of the congress was the chief organizer in Canada for the American Federation, and, stimulated by the superior financial resources which the latter body was beginning to devote to the Canadian field, he was making rapid additions to the American following in practically all parts of Canada. Compared with these gains the net addition to the congress, by the manner of direct chartering of locals, was insignificant. Lacking funds to put fully paid organizers in the field, the congress must perforce depend upon the irregular efforts of its officers and upon occasional resort to circularizing bodies already formed, pointing out the advantages of affiliation. Well might the vice-president for British Columbia remind the

congress in his report for 1902, "if we are to do anything for the trade union movement in Canada we must do it at once, or else all our organizations will become American organizations, which I for one do not wish to see." In the same report the writer expresses it as the "very prevalent" opinion in Vancouver and other parts of the province that the money paid to the American Federation of Labor as per capita tax by Canadian unions brought little in return, and that it should be paid instead to the Canadian congress to assist that body in extending its jurisdiction and in procuring legislation for the benefit of all.

Notwithstanding these various expressions of protest, when the intervening year had passed and the delegates were gathered once more for the annual business, events were to take a turn which placed the congress definitely in support of, and in dependence upon, international unionism. Question was raised at the outset as to the credentials of delegates from the Central Trades Council and the local cigar-makers' unions of Montreal. Such objection being overruled, the credential committee was appointed by the president as a special committee to submit amendments to the constitution.

The committee's report as finally adopted after practically a whole day's discussion definitely excluded all assemblies of the Knights of Labor, and central labor unions, and provided against the recognition of any national unions where internationals of the same craft existed, thus creating a division in the forces of labor in Canada which has lasted down to the present day. The vote on the clause excluding the Knights of Labor assemblies showed 73 in favor of exclusion and 43 against. The committee also found against the practice of having more than one central body in one locality—referring to the complicated and unsatisfactory situation that had been existing for some time in Montreal—and recommended that the Federated Trades Council be recognized as the central body for that city, it being expected in return to take a charter from the congress.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Labor Gazette*, Vol. III, p. 229.

As a result of this amendment to the constitution, twenty-three organizations were lost to the congress. Twelve of these, including one trades council, five Knights of Labor assemblies, and six independent unions, were located in Montreal, and about half of the remainder in Quebec City.<sup>32</sup> Although the international movement was to reassert itself and become the leading element in organized labor in Montreal in the next decade, it has failed to regain at Quebec the ground lost by this action of the Berlin convention.

#### IX. SURVEY OF ACTIVITIES AND CHARACTERIZATION OF PERIOD

The Canadian labor movement took its lead from its American membership for the first time in the eighties. Although American organizations were in the majority earlier, it was to British ideas and precedents, as we have seen, that the Canadian unions looked for leadership. But with the great incursion of the Knights of Labor about 1885, with their missionaries and their ideals, the mind of the movement, as well as its organization, seems to have been captured by the Americans. It was not until a decade later that a reaction came, bringing with it a critical attitude toward the close American connection and an attempt by a large element to extricate the Canadian membership and operate a more independent national movement.

Although the period of the later eighties was one of very rapid expansion of both Knights and unionist organizations, the methods of labor were not aggressive in any offensive sense. The former was not primarily a striking organization. As expressed by D. J. O'Donoghue in 1887, the tendency of its principles and methods was "in the direction of intellectual development, peaceful and lawful agitation, and an intelligent and united use of the ballot as a remedy" for grievances. It looked for arbitration ultimately "to remedy the necessity for strikes," and was depending on co-operation—productive and distributive—even-

<sup>32</sup> *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 47.

tually to take the place of the wage system. Nevertheless, the phenomenal rush of the hitherto unorganized unskilled workers into great assemblies with their pretentious "class" creed was soon challenged by certain employers in Ontario, and strikes against the employer's closed shop became a necessity. The first of these came in 1883 among the Toronto telegraphers whose defeat at the hands of the company is said to have checked for the time the growth of the order in Canada. Then in 1885 the president of the Toronto Street Car Company, learning that the employees had formed an assembly, issued a peremptory order "that no employee would be allowed connection with any labor organization, and decreeing that those who so belonged must sever the connection within a few days, or be discharged." No compromise being possible, a strike was finally ordered, lasting three months and resulting in the defeat of the men. The most interesting feature in connection with the conflict was the attempt of the strikers to operate co-operatively a bus service for the city in competition with the car company. In this they seem to have succeeded fairly well for a time, although they had to depend upon voluntary payment of fares, but in the end they lost their confidence and gave up the fight after an expenditure of \$14,000. In 1890 a strike for recognition and for the eight-hour day took place among the coal miners of Vancouver Island, eliciting a resolution of sympathy from the Trades and Labor Congress.

During the depression of the nineties the strike weapon naturally was held in abeyance, but with the new advance in union organization and the tendency toward business unionism at the close of the century, important conflicts took place at London and Winnipeg; the struggle in the former city being between the street-railway company and its employees; that in the latter involving the newly organized United Brotherhood of Railway Employees and the Canadian Northern Railway, and featuring also a jurisdictional quarrel between this labor body

and the railway brotherhoods. It is worthy of note that the Trades and Labor Congress assisted the strikers at London by receiving funds on their behalf from various organizations over the country. It is also an interesting point that more than half the support sent in through this channel came from unions in British Columbia.

During the decade or less when the Knights of Labor were showing their strength, the labor movement was characterized by a great deal of idealism and by expectations of rapid improvement to be brought about by different types of reform. Later the idealism waned, but with the general stagnation in industry and consequent hopelessness of industrial action, considerable attention, as we have seen, was turned toward political action, taxation reform, monetary reform, arbitration, and other methods and palliatives. Socialism made a bid for favor, but with the exception of British Columbia the Canadian worker appears to have been suspicious of it.

With the return to normal conditions and the drawing together of the Canadian congress and the American Federation of Labor through the institution of the system of fraternal delegates, the Canadian movement in general swung toward business unionism. In the closing years of the century great hopes were being built on the union label as a positive weapon in the hands of organized labor. The cigar-makers, hatters, and iron-molders had been using it for some time. With the completion of an agreement between three competing labels in the shoe industry in the United States in 1896, Canadian independent shoeworkers' unions began to affiliate with the international organization. Several Canadian cities yielded to the solicitations of organized labor to the point of requiring the union label upon all municipal printing; and in Toronto the Allied Printing Trades Council was working hard for the extension of its trade mark. In the bicycle business and in the clothing industry the label was also being introduced. By many it was accepted as an effective

remedy for convict labor manufacture, the sweat-shop, child labor, long hours, and bad working conditions—in fact for unfair treatment of every kind, as well as for dishonest workmanship, over a large part of the industrial field. The application of the principle was furthered both by city centrals and by the Canada Trades Congress.

During the period a considerable labor press was developed, prominent papers in the nineties being the *Saturday Times* of Montreal, the *Peoples' Voice* of Winnipeg, the *Industrial Banner* of London, the *Free Lance* of Ottawa, and *Le Travail* of Quebec. With regard to leadership, no single individual dominated the Canadian movement in an executive capacity comparable to Mr. Gompers in the United States. No less than five presidents presided over the Canadian congress during the two decades, beginning with Charles March, of the Toronto Trades and Labor Council. The office of secretary, however, met with fewer changes in personnel, Mr. George Dower, of the Toronto Typographers, serving continuously until 1900, when he was succeeded by the present incumbent, Mr. P. M. Draper. Notwithstanding the frequent change in chief executives, there was a true continuity of leadership, the same small group of men, notably from the Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, and Quebec councils, being ever to the fore with—toward the close—additions from Winnipeg and British Columbia. Along with more tangible contributions to the labor cause, the congress, then as later, rendered a great service in bringing strong leaders into the larger field, where their qualities could be more effectively utilized.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PROVINCIAL WORKMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The longest-lived and perhaps the most instructive experiment in pure Canadian unionism was that of the Provincial Workmen's Association among the coal miners of Nova Scotia. For a space of nearly forty years this self-contained conservative organization watched over the interests of the employees of this most considerable of the Canadian coal fields. Its membership being mostly native Nova Scotians, and its leaders being men who were students of the peculiar conditions of the Nova Scotia coal market, it always cherished the purpose of maintaining conditions of output as well as of obtaining a fair share of the returns to the workers. This sense of responsibility to the industry was, doubtless, accountable in no small degree for the comparatively small number of sanctioned strikes and for the large measure of good will existing between operators and employees. Another force making for the same result was the continuity and wisdom of its leadership; and these two factors, together with the voting strength of the mining element in the Nova Scotia elections, were responsible for the numerous laws and amendments which the organization was able to secure in the provincial legislature.

#### I. NATURE AND SCHEME OF ORGANIZATION

The Provincial Workmen's Association has been described both as an industrial and as a general labor union. In fact it was both. It began as a coal miners' union and ended as such, and at no time were the mining lodges not the backbone of the organization. But in the course of its history it was called upon to perform a considerable experiment in a more inclusive unionism.

Beginning in the year 1883, a lodge of glass-blowers was formed in Pictou County. Not long after a lodge of iron-workers was organized, and in 1891 Concord Lodge was formed among the boot and shoe workers of Amherst. In 1892 a resolution passed the Grand Council "that the Grand Secretary make it known to the press that the Provincial Workmen's Association is open to all trades and laborers, and not confined to those working in the mining industry." In the period 1899-1903, in answer to the bid of the Knights of Labor for favor in the province, lodges were organized among railway employees, steel workers, tramway-men, quarry-men, trimmers, and loaders at wharves, and retail clerks. "At one time more than one hundred classes of workmen were represented in the organization."<sup>1</sup>

But it soon became apparent that it had assumed a task for which it was not fitted. These additions had been taken on largely at their own desire, there being no other central body near with which they might affiliate. The Provincial Workmen's Association had been organized for, and was led by, miners. For a time the Grand Council did its best to perform the more varied duties imposed upon it, and with some success. But the minutes of that body are evidence of difficulties, now with getting trimmers at the wharves included under wage agreements, now with the retail clerks, and finally in 1904 a strike to maintain wages among the Sydney steel workers was lost, with resultant dissatisfaction in some quarters over the outlay by the association. After this the emphasis in organization was turned exclusively to miners and the workers in and around mines. By 1907 it was once more a coal miners' union.

The aims of the Provincial Workmen's Association, according to Article 2 of its constitution, were to promote wages "as the state of the trade shall warrant or allow"; to shorten the hours of labor; to secure the true weight of the miners' output; "to strive in obtaining better legislation whereby the more efficient

<sup>1</sup> *Fourth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 98.

management of mines . . . . may be effected—thereby securing the health and safety of the workmen”; “to secure compensation for injuries received while at work—where the employers may be liable”; to “support lodges and their members who may be locked out by their employers” or may be “forced to discontinue work on account of insufficient wages or from any unjust cause whatsoever”; finally, to foster virtuous habits among its members and to improve their condition morally, mentally, and socially.

The Provincial Workmen's Association was an institution in which, from the nature of the organization of the mining industry of Nova Scotia, and from the emphasis placed upon legislation, as much as from the framework and distribution of powers in the Association itself, a large amount of actual power rested in the Grand Council. The structure of the organization consisted of local lodges, a Grand Council, and three subcouncils: one for Cape Breton Island, one for Pictou County, and a third for Cumberland, each of which areas embraces a separate coal field.

The Grand Council, the chief deliberative and co-ordinating body and the controller of legislation, held regular meetings twice a year up till 1890, after which it met annually. It consisted of delegates from the lodges, selected by the latter in proportion to membership and instructed with respect to important matters how they should vote. The “grand officers,” who bore the titles and carried out a ritual of free-masonry in addition to the usual union functions, were elected at the annual sessions by the assembled delegates from among their own number. The most important among them was the grand secretary, a salaried officer who took the lead in organizing activities, in giving advice to and restraining the lodges in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the order, and in general devoting his time to union matters. Although the position was open to all members, two men, Robert Drummond and John Moffat, by virtue of their qualifications and experience, performed the duties of the office for practi-

cally the whole period of the organization's history, each for a space of nineteen years. During the later years the grand master was called upon to take a more active part in the work of organizing, and this office also was performed many years consecutively by Mr. S. B. McNeill, a Sydney miner with a background of experience in British Columbia.

The Grand Council made use of a number of standing committees. The most important was the Legislative Committee, appointed at the last session of each annual convention, whose duty it was to put into proper form the resolutions having to do with legislation, and to urge them upon the legislature. The chief executive was generally in company with the committee when it waited upon the provincial government. When the order was at its height two legislative committees were appointed, one for miners and one for mechanics. After 1900 the docket system of carrying on business was adopted, the whole work of the convention, as handed in from the various lodges, being read at the first session. The grand secretary's report for the year just concluded was also read at the beginning of the convention and served as a guide for the action of the delegates. This report, which was subsequently printed in the official organ, became an important feature in Provincial Workmen's Association activities.

The subcouncils functioned in their respective districts somewhat after the manner of the Grand Council. They had power to make rules and by-laws for their own government, so long as these did not conflict with the constitution. The minutes of their meetings were read at the regular conventions of the Grand Council.<sup>2</sup> The subcouncils functioned largely with respect to im-

<sup>2</sup> The beginnings of the subcouncil system originated in the circumstances of the isolation of the Cape Breton lodges in the years prior to the establishment of rail connection with the Island. For some years there was relatively little connection between these lodges, operating under this first subcouncil, and the Nova Scotia lodges under the Grand Council. Subsequently the Cumberland and Pic-tou districts were given subcouncils, and a better-balanced arrangement was in-

portant relations between the men and the companies in their own districts, paying less attention to legislative matters. At the 1905 convention of the Grand Council the right of the subcouncils to sanction strikes or form new trade agreements was challenged, but it was deemed sufficient that the grand secretary had the privilege of representing the Grand Council at the lesser bodies' meetings. No appeal existed from a decision of a sub-council except upon constitutional grounds.<sup>3</sup>

The Grand Council was dependent upon the lodges for revenue, receiving at times a per capita tax of 10 cents, but in later years 6 cents monthly against the membership of each lodge, 20 cents against each new member, and \$7.00 charter fee from each new lodge upon its organization. The Council had powers under the constitution to enforce a levy of not more than \$1.00 per member to aid any lodge that might be forced to strike. It had no power to call strikes, but it exercised the right of advising and sanctioning, and of withholding the support of the Association from unapproved strikes. More than this, it might suspend a disobedient lodge or unconditionally revoke its charter, a power it saw fit to exercise on several important occasions. Again, the constitution required that any reduction of wages to the members of a lodge, or any change in the working conditions affecting their interests, should be reported immediately to the grand secretary. The importance of this clause will be appreciated when it is remembered that the various collieries were generally competing for orders from the same consumers.<sup>4</sup>

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stituted throughout, the grand secretary being present at subcouncil meetings, where he had advisory and voting rights.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the above, bimonthly district meetings were indulged in for a time—1902 and following—to meet the tendency to amalgamation among the companies, but these were soon dropped as too costly and as affording an opportunity to rival labor forces to bring disharmony into the Association.

<sup>4</sup> A further guaranty against disunited action—though it did not directly involve the Grand Council—was afforded by the clause that “no lodge, or lodges, shall be allowed to enter into any contract concerning wages or hours of labor

It was not uncommon for the Grand Council to instruct the lodges to sign petitions for legislation, as, for example, in the drive for manhood suffrage in 1887, though it had no power to enforce its instructions. Occasionally, too, it would refer a matter to the lodges for comment and suggestion. It served as a court of appeal from the judgments of lodge officers. By the constitution the right of membership included the following: "All males, seventeen years of age, or over, who are workmen, in non-official positions, in mines works or factories . . . provided they are honest and trustworthy, and not engaged directly or indirectly in the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors." But "no person can become or remain a member of a P.W.A. lodge who is a member of any other trades union in the same locality," and "those only in connection with the 'works' in a locality where there is a lodge are eligible for membership." No member was allowed to hold the higher offices of the lodge until he had belonged to the order for six months. A system of transfer cards was operated among the lodges, and exclusiveness and secrecy of business was sought by means of a pass-word which was changed by the grand officers and sent out to the various lodges every three months. The lodges, at their meetings, carried through a ritual similar to that of the Grand Council, and had a group of officers, elected quarterly, corresponding to those of the latter body.

## II. THE EARLY PERIOD OF ITS HISTORY: 1879-98

In his interesting account of the Canadian labor movement, Mr. R. H. Coats writes of the conditions and circumstances leading to the formation of the Provincial Workmen's Association as follows:

In the spring of 1879 the Springhill Mining Company of Nova Scotia posted a notice throughout its works declaring a reduction of wages of

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without submitting the whole of such proposed contract to the members of every lodge, and obtaining the sanction of the majority of the members of the lodges."

about four cents a ton. A decrease in cutting rates had been made a short time previously, and the second announcement led to widespread dissatisfaction among the men, and ultimately to a strike. The dissatisfaction was all the greater as the price of coal was higher at the time than in several years before. The meeting at which the strikers organized was held in a wood by night, a short distance from the town of Springhill. . . .<sup>5</sup>

Several annual reports of the first grand secretary, which indulge in retrospective reviews, notably the tenth, picture in greater detail the working conditions in the mines and the weakness of the miners' position in relations with the management. Included in the picture are the following items: Lack of any say in mine inspection, no right to appear before a coroner's jury investigating an accident, no sickness or accident or death benefits, little opportunity to rise in the service on the basis of merit or acquired theoretical knowledge, no way of settling disputes except by strike, no way of protecting themselves against unfair dockage or extravagant charges for powder, or dismissal without cause. Any hope of betterment by legislation was enfeebled by the fact that only one man in nine had the right to vote in provincial or federal elections. Unions themselves were viewed as illegal.

The outcome of these conditions and of the strike mentioned before was organization. The first words recorded in the minutes of the Grand Council of the Provincial Workmen's Association are the following: "At a largely attended meeting of min-

<sup>5</sup> R. H. Coats, *The Labor Movement in Canada*, "Canada and Its Provinces" series, Vol. IX, 60. The spirit of this paragraph is in accord with the statement made by Grand Secretary Moffatt in his valedictory address at the dissolution meeting of 1917, when, speaking of the persistence of the Provincial Workmen's Association in surviving many difficulties, he said: "Had the P.W.A. been instituted by . . . professional agitators, it might have died in its infancy. But it sprang into being . . . in response to the wish of those who had been subjected to indignities, who had suffered loss, who were beaten down, and yet who had in them a sturdy spirit of independence. The need for it was not created after the society had been formed, but it came to supply . . . a long felt want, a crying need."

ers held at Springhill . . . . on the 29th day of August, 1879, it was unanimously resolved to form an association to defend and protect the interests of the miners and other workers about collieries." At this meeting one Thomas Leadbetter was elected president; and Robert Drummond, an overground boss and reporter to one of the Halifax papers (later a member of the Legislative Council of Nova Scotia), was chosen secretary and agent. A committee was appointed to act with the president and secretary to draw up a constitution and code of rules and by-laws for the government of the association.

At a later meeting the same day this committee, having carried through its program, was "organized into a provisional Grand Council to exercise the functions laid down in the constitution until such time as a Grand Council was legally constituted by the appointment of duly certified delegates from the various lodges which it was expected would shortly be constituted. The first local lodge formed was Pioneer No. 1, organized at Springhill on September 1, 1879."<sup>6</sup> During the next two months three lodges were organized by Grand Secretary Drummond in the Pictou collieries at Westville and Stellarton, and on October 15, 1879, delegates from the five lodges then constituting the order met at Truro to form the first meeting of the Grand Council of the Provincial Miners' Association.

<sup>6</sup> *Fourth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 97. This first-born of the order was destined to be the banner lodge of the Association for many years and to draw repeatedly the praise of the grand secretary for its consistent attendance at lodge meetings and prompt payment of dues. It was the solid anchor of the Provincial Workmen's Association while other lodges were coming and going in this earlier period when the idea of unionism and its benefits was in the incubation stage among the miners of the province. With the greater development of the mining industry in Cape Breton at the close of the century it was forced to yield the leadership in point of membership to some of the Island lodges. By a strange turn of fortune it was to be the first to desert the Provincial Workmen's Association and go over to a rival organization when it seemed to its members that the greater resources of the rival had more to offer to the Nova Scotia miner.

The history of the Provincial Workmen's Association naturally divides itself into two equal periods: that preceding and that following the great depression in its membership and vitality in 1898. These periods are marked by a considerable difference in the extent of the order, by a change in leadership, and by a difference in methods and policies adopted.

In the year 1881 the Association was incorporated by an act of the Nova Scotia Legislature under the name of the Provincial Workmen's Association. Previous to this the grand secretary had been sent to Cape Breton, where he organized several lodges. As noted before, these lodges operated under a subcouncil pledged to carry out the constitution and rules of the parent organization on the mainland. A representative of the subcouncil attended the meeting of the Grand Council in October, 1881, where he reported greatly improved conditions among the miners of Cape Breton. The question of amalgamation was considered at various meetings of the Grand Council during the eighties, but the Island lodges to whom the matter was submitted in 1885 decided against it, choosing rather to keep in touch by sending a representative to carry to the Grand Council the progress and the problems of the Cape Breton miners each year, and to bring back the report of their brothers in Nova Scotia. The reasons for this attitude were the lack of traveling facilities at the time and the cost of sending delegates. Moreover, the amalgamation process on the part of the companies, which later made closer union indispensable, had not yet begun. After 1890, when the Island lodges began to have regular delegates at the Grand Council, the membership in Cape Breton appears to have been generally in excess of the Nova Scotia membership.

Taking the returns of the lodges as shown in the grand secretary's reports, considerable fluctuation occurred in the following which the Association commanded. Its circumstances varied somewhat according to the season, being stronger in winter than in summer; but more according to the condition of industry,

and the presence or absence of any stimulating cause. Membership rose during the middle eighties in connection with the entry of the order into politics, and again some ten years later for the same reason. It was increased by the sudden appreciation of the worth of unionism by otherwise non-union men at times of strikes. With no particular excitement its numbers dropped to the lowest for the period in the years 1888-90, two of the old Pictou lodges becoming completely dormant. The indifference of the majority while a few carried the brunt of the battle in

TABLE II

Year	Number of Lodges	Membership in Good Standing*
1883.....	9	1,170
1884.....	.....	1,860
1893.....	15	1,100
1895.....	16	1,416

\* The enrolled membership often ran much larger. In 1895 it was 2,000. Although the distribution of membership varied from time to time, there was after the middle eighties a rather steady shifting of the balance of numerical strength from the mainland to the Cape Breton lodges, a movement that was accentuated by the development taking place in the Island collieries after 1900. As between the Nova Scotia coal fields, the Pictou membership was generally in excess of that of Cumberland, although the latter was more constant.

maintaining the order was a cause, together with their "extreme selfishness, petty jealousies, childish captiousness, and love of change," of much reprimanding by the grand secretary in his biannual reports. Some idea of the membership for the period is to be obtained from figures in Table II.

At no time prior to 1900 were the miners anywhere near complete organization. In fact, at times there were considerable open-shop tendencies evidenced here and there among the operators.

From the beginning the organization had an official organ in the *Trades Journal*, edited by R. Drummond. At first the Association assumed the responsibility of guaranteeing Mr. Drummond against loss in the publication of this paper, he apparently

having started it and used it in the interests of the workers prior to the formation of the union. In 1884 Mr. Drummond bought out the interest of the Grand Council in the paper for \$500, and thereafter received an annual subsidy from that body for conducting it in the interests of the Association. The ready pen of the able and educated grand secretary was an important force in laying the foundations and coloring the thought of the organization, in airing the miners' grievances, and in establishing a recognition for the Association beyond its immediate membership. In this early period the grand secretary's annual report upon the Association was regularly published in the *Journal*.<sup>7</sup>

The first period was largely devoted to a reform of the conditions under which the miners lived and labored, but strikes were in the main held in disfavor, only four of any importance occurring. The first of these took place at Drummond Colliery within a year of the founding of the Association. Troubles over alleged promises by the company in regard to payment of men at the pillars were cause for the grand officers to visit Westville in October to confer with the mine manager, and a few weeks later, the difficulties having again cropped up, for a special meeting of the Grand Council. The latter met with Cameron Lodge of Westville and a series of memorials were sent to the company manager and replies received. Some of the grievances were removed, but others were refused remedy. Chief among the latter appears to have been a 10-cent reduction in the wages of certain bankmen. The members of the lodge were at variance on whether or not the matter was of sufficient importance to warrant a strike, and, being unable to decide the question, it was agreed to leave the affair entirely in the hands of the Grand Council. The course of action of the latter was decided when the delegate from Cameron Lodge declared that "if the Grand Council refused to

<sup>7</sup> After Mr. Drummond's retirement the official views of the Provincial Workmen's Association were represented successively by *The Searchlight*, the *Gloucester Bay Gazette*, and the *Provincial Workman*, the latter after the year 1904.

sanction the strike in the present temper of the lodge, it would be disastrous to the cause of the union in Westville." A last memorial was sent and a reply received in terms which brought all further communications to a close. The strike was barely under way when it became known to the grand secretary that certain members were planning to intimidate the mine manager by doing some gunning under the windows of his residence. Steps were immediately taken to counteract such measures and to teach the miners that such methods were no part of the Provincial Workmen's Association's program at any time. Nevertheless the manager made application for the militia, and soldiers were sent to Westville. No hard feeling, however, seems to have resulted. The difficulty was eventually settled when the directors of the company visited Westville and conferred with a committee from the lodge. The chief result of the strike was that the Provincial Workmen's Association secured the right of having committees appointed by the lodge, received by the management. This marked the beginning of recognition of the union in the Pictou coal fields.

In 1882 a strike occurred at Lingan Colliery, Cape Breton, which continued for a year and ended in a compromise. Workmen, it appears, were brought from Scotland as strikebreakers, but these, learning that a strike was in progress, refused to go to work. The militia were called out in this case also, but their services were not required. How active a part the Provincial Workmen's Association took in this strike is not indicated in the records of the time, but references to the event some years afterward indicate that Provincial Workmen's Association funds were sent in to support the strikers, the Grand Council exercising its constitutional power of levying against the membership of the Association. Some difficulty seems, however, to have been experienced in collecting.

The third strike took place in Pictou in 1887, lasting throughout the winter and affecting three lodges. It followed an amalga-

mation of three collieries and a subsequent wage reduction at one of the mines. The Grand Council being called in, it was decided that the new wage rate could not be tolerated. Arbitration was offered, but refused by the company, with the result that at the beginning of January the offended lodge called out its members. A few weeks later, in order to make the action more effective, the other two lodges went out in sympathy. It was not until April that a compromise was arrived at and the men went back. Arbitration had again been urged in the meantime, and the grand secretary, in his spring report, was sounding the praises of compulsory arbitration by legislative enactment as the hope of the Nova Scotia miner. Cumberland County lodges sent in all the support they could muster, and considerable aid was sent from Cape Breton. Nevertheless the narrow basis of the organization must have been felt in the face of the amalgamated company. There was considerable talk at the time of the necessity of starting a defense fund.

A fourth strike of some importance occurred at Springhill during the summer of 1890. It arose over a demand of the workers for the cessation of a system of docking which they maintained was illegal as well as unjust, and was carried to a successful termination by the local lodge with very little assistance from the Association. The struggle is noteworthy in that it reflects the attitude of public mind in the province toward the union, the Association having cause to thank the press at the close of the strike for its fair presentation of the workers' case, and especially Hon. Mr. Fielding, the premier of Nova Scotia, for his interest in hastening a settlement.<sup>8</sup>

The Chief Executive of the Provincial Workmen's Association was opposed to the strike as a method of unionism except as a last resort after all other efforts had failed. The grand secretary declared in 1894 that "since the formation of the Society strikes have been fewer than formerly—relatively to the larger

<sup>8</sup> Minutes of Grand Council, October, 1890.

number employed and the enlargement of the trade. . . . As an Association we do not believe much in strikes, but are forced to look upon them, for want of something more modern . . . as necessary evils." He added, however, in the same report that in the fifteen years of its experience every strike indorsed by the Grand Council had been successful in whole or in part. His hopes for the welfare of the miners, nevertheless, throughout the period were along gentler and more human lines. At times he professed faith in the reasonableness of the Nova Scotia employers and talked in favor of conciliation and voluntary arbitration. He favored making legislation—including the building up of a code of laws protecting the worker at his task, and the passage of a compulsory arbitration act for the settlement of disputes—his main reliance. He also had a leaning toward independent political action.

With regard to arbitration, he argued in 1886 that it had been a failure in the past because "labor was not recognized as a party of equal privileges with capital. But now the workmen's case is recognized as worthy of hearing." With the recognition of the workers' rights, strikes were to be a thing of the past and arbitration was to come into its own. The Provincial Workmen's Association was one of the forces behind the Arbitration Act of 1888 passed by the Liberal government of the province, the operators on the other hand being in opposition. In 1889 we find the Grand Council, through Pioneer Lodge, trying to test the worth of the act by forcing arbitration upon the company at Springhill. The commissioner granted arbitration under this compulsory act, but the company certioraried his grant on the plea that no proper notice had been given for examination of the complaint. Later we find the Grand Council trying to make the act more effective by necessary amendments, and supporting the Toronto Trades Council in its attempt to get a compulsory bill through the Federal House.

The method of settlement of disputes through conciliation

was of course operative throughout, but as the organization grew stronger and as its chief executive became personally known to the managers of the various companies, this method became more effective, and, with the waning of the earlier faith in other peaceful methods, it became the chief mode of action in the middle nineties. The grand secretary was wont to travel around to each scene of disturbance and endeavor to smooth the troubled waters.<sup>9</sup>

In 1886 the organization threw itself enthusiastically into politics.<sup>10</sup> Although nothing appears in the records of the time to confirm the thought, it is doubtless true that the example of the Knights of Labor in upper Canada and in the United States was a factor in this movement. The grand secretary was entirely captured by the possibilities of the political method. Even in the disappointment of defeat he ends a long reference to the matter at the autumn meeting of the Grand Council in which he severely lashes the Pictou lodges for their failure to do their duty in the following words: "I think the Grand Council will agree with me here, but should it not, should it conclude that politics are not within the legitimate sphere of operations of the P.W.A., then, in my opinion, it declares that it does not fully comprehend the situation, is behind the times, and ignores or is truly ignorant of the

<sup>9</sup> In 1894 he reports a number of difficulties between managers and men at various lodges, every one of which he had been able to settle satisfactorily to the parties. In the fall of 1896 he says: "It is a source of gratification to observe the better spirit of conciliation animating many of the employers, and the greater desire of the men to have difficulties settled by conference, and a gradually lessening desire to have recourse to force. Both managers and men are beginning more fully to realize that the easier and more peaceful way is the surer and speedier. The very fact that old ways and methods are being departed from does not lessen, but rather increases, the necessity for thorough organization" (Minutes of Grand Council, 1896).

<sup>10</sup> In Cumberland and in Pictou labor candidates contested the field for the local legislature, but in both cases unsuccessfully, in the one case due to the failure of outsiders to give the Provincial Workmen's Association candidate any considerable support, and in the other to the backsliding at the eleventh hour of many of the workers themselves to the old parties.

surest method of securing those benefits and privileges which this, our Association, professedly aims to attain."<sup>11</sup>

Four years later we find the Grand Council again urging the lodges to political action, depending upon the effects of education and the increased suffrage extended to the workers in the meantime to bring about better results.<sup>12</sup>

In 1892, to the assertion of some members that political activities had injured the order, the grand secretary answered that while this might be true as regards numbers, it was not true with regard to the purposes for which it stood. The matter of entering the arena in the 1894 elections was discussed at the Grand Council meeting of the autumn previous, and the lodges were asked to submit the names of workingmen whom they favored to the grand secreatry. There seems to have been a strong current of opinion, however, based doubtless upon their success in getting legislation from the Fielding government, that they stood to gain more by maintaining themselves in the respect of the older parties.

Probably the outstanding feature of the Provincial Workmen's Association was its success in carrying legislation through the provincial government for the benefit of the mine workers. And it was during the earlier period that the more fundamental legislation, largely in the form of amendments to the mining law, was passed. The Association had not been formed a year before it was applying for legislation at Halifax. In 1880 the government was asked to provide for adequate mine inspection. A year later the Grand Council was criticizing the personnel of the board of examiners that had been appointed, contending that the board should not consist exclusively of mine managers. The fault was remedied by the provision of salaried deputy inspectors and by committees of workingmen being given the right to

<sup>11</sup> Minutes of Grand Council, October, 1886.

<sup>12</sup> Candidates were put in the field in Cape Breton and in Cumberland. This time the Cape Breton candidate was returned, the other being again defeated.

inspect the mine and make a report which was to be kept on file in the mine. In 1883 the Grand Council requested each lodge to appoint a committee to study the mining laws, offer amendments and suggestions, and send them to the grand secretary within four months. Rapidly in order after this the following legislation was secured: Representatives of the workmen were to have the right to be present at coroners' inquests, with the privilege of examining witnesses; examination of places within a specified time before the miners go to work was provided; mines were to be under the control of certified officials; a board of examiners was provided for granting certificates; more systematic and thorough examination of the working places was secured; the suffrage was extended to all workers with an annual income in excess of \$250, and to all miners living in company houses of the annual value of \$150; no liquor license should be operative within a mile of a coal mine; the first arbitration act was passed; schools of instruction for miners were provided, and government aid to relief societies; provision was made for tribunals of arbitration in particular cases; semimonthly payment of wages was stipulated for, and regulation of the employment of boys with requirements as to age and education; miners were to be holders of certificates; check-weigh men were to be chosen by ballot; shot-firers were to have certificates; mine workers were to serve an apprenticeship of two years before being allowed to take charge of a working place; provision was made for the workmen to select their own doctors; stoppage of wages for various kinds of taxes was forbidden unless by written consent of the worker; and finally, the right was guaranteed to any worker, when authorized by twelve others, to prosecute a manager for any infringement of the Mines' Regulation Act.

Attempts were also made to put through a lien law making wages a first claim upon the assets of any company in financial difficulties. A bill was introduced into the legislature in 1887, but was withdrawn by the grand secretary upon his being in-

formed of the legal difficulties which the enforcement of such a law presented.<sup>13</sup>

In 1896 the grand secretary declared that the miners of Nova Scotia were in advance of those of any English-speaking country with regard to legislation. Some relation between this unusual success of the union in procuring legislation and the voting strength of the miners at provincial elections is visible enough, yet withal the administration of Mr. Fielding was deserving of the gratitude that was felt toward it. In 1896 the Grand Council drafted a resolution "thanking, in the name of the P.W.A. the Honorable Mr. Fielding for the many services rendered the workmen of Nova Scotia during his premiership."

A lesser exercise of legislative endeavor was directed toward the federal government. Solicitation was made for inspection of stationary boilers, for a more frequent inspection of scales, and for an extension of the Dominion franchise, the last being obtained in the middle eighties. But the main issues in this direction centered in the questions of tariff duties on coal and immigration. With regard to foreigners, for a time no antipathy was entertained toward them, and the entry of a party of fifty Belgians into McBean Lodge in the Pictou coal field was unchallenged. The Grand Council was more concerned with instructing them, through an interpreter, in the rules of the order. It soon became evident, however, that in this matter of the immigrant there was lurking a great danger to the future of the Association. Springhill reported an intake of Europeans and a corresponding outflow of native Nova Scotians in 1888. Some protection was afforded in the law requiring miners to have certificates, the examination for which it was specified should be conducted in English, but, inasmuch as a major part of the trouble came from the inflow of miners from the British Isles, this was

<sup>13</sup> For legislation effected by Provincial Workmen's Association, cf. *Fourth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 98.

found to be quite inadequate. Church society importations were severely scored, as well as the activities of various Canadian agents in the old country who painted the opportunities of Nova Scotia in too glowing colors, and protection was sought by way of government action. In 1895 the Grand Council appointed a delegate to get up petitions in the mining districts of Cape Breton to be forwarded to the Dominion Parliament asking "that foreigners be prohibited from coming into this country under contract."

Apparently no organized action was taken on the tariff question, although the grand secretary was wont to call attention to the importance of raising or maintaining the duty if the Nova Scotia industry was to hold its leading outside market, viz., Quebec. In fact, he kept it continually before the Association that the wages question was closely tied up with the operators' hold upon the markets, and that the wage rate must accommodate itself to the state of the trade. Each year he discussed the season's expectancies as to prices in his report and represented it to the Council as a concern of the delegates for their discussion. In 1893 he defended the Nova Scotia government in granting a hundred-year lease to the Dominion Coal Company in Cape Breton on the ground that it would be better able, through its control of a large part of the output of the province, to effect a much-needed extension of the market, possibly through invading New England.

Other problems which interested the organization in this early period were various matters concerning working conditions, i.e., fallen stone, low place work, introduction of machines, regular pay days, the matter of payment rates for overtime, and finally a movement to get an eight-hour day for underground and nine hours for surface men. Considerable attention was given to making the latter a matter of legislation, but without avail. In matters less closely connected with work and wages the organization was instrumental in securing educa-

tional betterment through lodge activities and mining schools; it accomplished considerable in the way of encouraging relief societies for accident and sickness, and became a force in the community making for sobriety. In contrast with some earlier unions in the province, it gained the good will of the public and was accorded fair treatment in the press. As regards the mining companies, it became the practice in most cases for these to collect the dues of the lodges. The grand secretary was probably not overstating the case when in 1897 he spoke of the Provincial Workmen's Association as the "strongest single trade labor organization in Canada."

But within a year this happy condition of affairs was blasted. In 1898 the Association was disrupted by the problem of the "company store." Only three lodges were left to the Grand Council at one time, and the others, in a state of disorganization, were being gathered in by the Knights of Labor which entered the field at this time. The store question was discussed by the Grand Council of 1895 and again brought up as a grievance by four lodges in 1896. After a considerable airing of opinions a committee was appointed and brought in the following (not unanimous) report: "That after a date to be determined by the Grand Council, the men now dealing in company stores shall have the privilege of discontinuing further dealings; that the company shall not, after a date to be fixed upon, deduct from the wages of any one who has left off dealing at the company store, a larger sum than 10% of the debtor's net earnings."

It was then moved and carried that "in the event of the Dominion Coal Company failing to agree to the conditions proposed, that legislation bearing on the subject be applied for by those lodges opposed to stoppage of money, and that said lodges send each a delegate to lay the matter before the government."

During the year following an opposition bill was paraded in the lobbies of the House at Halifax requiring that the companies pay the miners in cash and nothing but cash, and that inspectors

be appointed to see that "orders" and any and all such things were not substituted. It was sponsored by independent merchants of the mining towns and by two of the largest lodges of the Provincial Workmen's Association. The grand secretary was personally opposed to such a policy, holding with those who argued that the company store—whatever its merits or demerits elsewhere—was at the time a necessity in Cape Breton, where a large part of the men were idle through the winter months and regularly depended upon credit.

A special meeting of the Grand Council was called in May and it was decided that unless within a specified time these lodges accepted loyally and complied with the requirements of the Council, the decree of suspension should issue. The compliance not being forthcoming, the lodges were suspended for four months from July 1. The Grand Council meeting of 1898 included delegates from only five lodges. In a historic note some years later, Grand Secretary Moffatt writes the following:

The Company Store question was taken as a weapon to disrupt the P.W.A. and establish the Knights of Labor, . . . . For a time it appeared as if the P.W.A. was to disappear. Its membership had fallen over half. But after its able founder and leader Mr. Drummond had resigned, and following him Robert Anderson, the organization revived and spread all over Nova Scotia. . . . . The membership remained low and a number of collieries were unorganized from 1897 to 1900.<sup>14</sup> The Knights of Labor gained a foothold, but made no material progress.

The activities of the Knights of Labor extended over a period of two years, and the internal strife which they and other causes introduced into the Provincial Workmen's Association, together with the shutting down of some of the mines at the time, reduced the number of lodges from sixteen to three and brought the Grand Council into a state of indebtedness. The

<sup>14</sup> Robert Anderson succeeded Mr. Drummond July 1, 1898, but resigned after three months, and Mr. Moffatt, of Golden Rule Lodge, Cape Breton, was chosen. He had already been a member for fourteen years and had served as grand master in 1896.

immediate reason for the latter condition was a series of lawsuits instituted to recover the property of several of the lodges that apparently had been made over to the enemy by the seceders. The Provincial Workmen's Association was eventually success-

TABLE III

Convention Year	Number of Lodges Represented	Membership Represented
1901.....	24	5,000
1902.....	29	6,000
1903.....	35	.....
1904.....	42	8,000
1905.....	43	8,000
1907.....	42	7,000

ful in these suits, although some of them carried through to 1900. Such was the state of affairs at the beginning of the second period, which, "briefly summed up, found the P.W.A. a weakened and bankrupt organization."<sup>15</sup>

TABLE IV

Year	Income	Balance on Hand
1902.....	\$ 2,196.91	.....
1903.....	3,823.16	\$2,026.80
1904.....	3,823.82	1,613.23†
1905.....	5,221.56*	.....
1907.....	10,000 +	.....

\* Including contributions to local strikes and to the defense fund.

† Reduction due to Sydney steel strike.

### III. THE SECOND PERIOD OF ITS HISTORY: 1898-1917

Under the lead of the new grand secretary measures were taken to allay the prejudice caused by the strife and to win the confidence of the miners back to the Provincial Workmen's Association. That they were successful, the statement of growth of conventions and membership in Table III is abundant evidence.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. valedictory report of Grand Secretary Moffatt.

The financial condition meanwhile is reflected in the figures given in Table IV.

The report for 1907 showed, on deposit:

Defense fund account . . . . .	\$14,096.92
General account . . . . .	3,762.21
Expenditures for the year . . . . .	2,949.60

The increase in membership after 1900 to figures unparalleled in the earlier period is not to be ascribed entirely to winning back the confidence of the miners, but also to a number of other factors. Among these may be named: (1) increased output of coal in the province, (2) the extension of the Association to include other trades than mining, (3) certain fundamental changes in methods and policies.

The following figures<sup>16</sup> indicate the increase in production of coal:

Year	Output in Tons
1881 . . . . .	1,280,000
1891 . . . . .	2,267,000
1898 . . . . .	2,563,000
1899 . . . . .	3,148,000
*1901 . . . . .	3,625,000
1904 . . . . .	5,250,000
1905 . . . . .	5,350,000
*1906 . . . . .	5,866,605

\* Year ending September 30.

Although some attention had been given to other than mining trades in the earlier period, it was in the years 1900 to 1903 that the great expansion took place. Apparently this was partly due to the feeling of the need of greater numbers with varying sources of income to meet the amalgamation tendencies among the mine owners,<sup>17</sup> and partly due to a desire to strike back at the Knights of Labor, whose lodges were now becoming dissat-

<sup>16</sup> *Labor Gazette*, I, 121; III, 364; VI, 827; VII, 1450.

<sup>17</sup> The union of the Dominion Coal Company and Dominion Iron and Steel Company took place in 1902.

isfied with their weakening policies. In a short space the Association had developed into a union with a widely varied membership and had assumed responsibilities which it soon discovered it was unable to carry. The disillusionment came with the Sydney steel strike in 1903 and the clamor by the steel workers for sympathetic action in order to paralyze industry. The steel strikers were eventually defeated and their lodges never rallied thereafter. Likewise the railway men proved no asset to the order. In regard to them the grand secretary reported as follows to the 1905 convention: "The I.C.R. men at Sydney have received two advances through the P.W.A.; they have got all they can get, and left it without even saying good-bye. One lodge . . . . at Halifax alone remains under discouraging circumstances." Other non-mining accretions proved for various reasons unsatisfactory.

After 1900, while the legislative committees continued to press for further reforms and measures were taken for more effectively registering the Association's requirements at Ottawa, the emphasis in the Provincial Workmen's Association's policy was upon the methods of business unionism. Corresponding with the upward trend in the price of coal, which became marked at this time, the Association put forward its demands for wage increases, proceeded to insure their permanence by means of trade agreements covering periods generally of two and three years, and sought through the closed shop to guarantee the union against being undermined by non-union men.

In 1900 the Grand Council called for a general wage increase of  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. The mainland lodges succeeded in obtaining the increase, in Pictou readily, in Cumberland after a strike threat; but in Cape Breton the demand was refused by the Dominion Coal Company. Conditions being unfavorable for a strike because it was winter and the men were dependent on the company stores, the employees of the Dominion Coal Company decided to submit the matter to arbitration, making appli-

cation under the Miners' Arbitration Act of Nova Scotia. The board which was granted by the Commissioner of Mines found that whereas an increase had already been given in May, 1900, and that whereas the company's prices were still governed by contracts entered into before the rise in coal, "the miners were not entitled to the increase demanded by them in whole or in part"; but it decided that if certain profits should be made in the following year the increase was to be granted. The profits were made and the orders of the board carried out. Another increase of 10 per cent quickly followed. Mechanics, meanwhile, who had asked for a 50-cent raise on their \$1.35 wage and 25 cents for their helpers, were granted nothing by this board; but they also were given satisfaction the year following.

Shortly after this use of the provincial arbitration machinery the employees of another company, the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company, applied to the Minister of Labor at Ottawa for the services of the department under the Conciliation Act of 1900. The deputy-minister, Mr. King, was sent to Sydney mines and New Glasgow during the summer of 1901, where he soon succeeded in arranging an agreement, basing the wages of this company upon the schedule of the Dominion Iron and Steel Company. He also instituted a plan for future settlement of difficulties through conciliation, and, this failing, by triparty arbitration.<sup>18</sup>

On June 1, 1904, the Association became involved in the strike of the steel workers at Sydney, the most important strike in Canada during the year. The Dominion Iron and Steel Company had reduced wages on December 1, 1903—as they alleged, "on account of the state of the market." The Provincial Workmen's Association in April, 1904, demanded a return to the wage scale of 1903, and pressed the case during the following month. The strike involved practically the entire force of over 1,500 men. The company answered the strike order by declaring a

<sup>18</sup> *Labor Gazette*, Vol. II, 23.

general suspension of work until the market improved. In July it undertook to resume operations. Disturbances occurred in connection with resumption which was the sign for bringing in the militia, although the Provincial Workmen's Association is reported to have aided the local police in maintaining order. Inasmuch as other industries were directly dependent upon the steel industry, the strike brought great depression upon Sydney. The city board of trade sought the Dominion Department of Labor for conciliation services, but these services were refused for some time by the Provincial Workmen's Association, the men being greatly incensed at the government, blaming it for the presence of the troops. Finally, however, Deputy King's services were accepted. He proceeded again to Cape Breton and instituted conciliation proceedings. The Provincial Workmen's Association subcouncil, after receiving assurances from the company relative to nondiscrimination, etc., declared the strike off on July 22. The episode was a severe blow to the Association. Many of the miners' lodges, although not directly affected, had contributed heavily, some to the extent of mortgaging their assembly halls. But worse than the sacrifice was the consciousness of its futility, when "scabs" to the number of several hundred were engaged to work when the company lifted its suspension in July, thus proving the weakness of the organization in a situation of this nature. In the end nothing was gained. Moreover, it was understood the company would receive in the future only committees of its own men.

A strike at Westville in November, 1906, and others at Sydney, Bridgeport, and Springhill in 1907, while all short in duration, are of interest in that they mark the sterner side of the Association's drive for the closed shop, a movement that accounted in large degree for the maintenance of membership totals even while the organization was moving back to a purely miners' union. In three of these cases the companies seem to have been taken into confidence beforehand and to have taken no part in

the dispute, choosing to use the occasion for repair work, while the union men forced the non-union men into the lodges by refusing to work the mines while non-union men were present as such. The closed-shop policy was first recommended to the lodges by the Grand Council in 1905. The campaign was completely successful, other lodges effecting the desired result without stoppages. In the fall of 1907 the statement was made that the collieries had advanced to complete organization for the first time in the history of the province.

The first intimation that the Provincial Workmen's Association had of the bearing of the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act upon its activities was when it learned that the strike at Springhill of April 1907 was illegal by virtue of the restrictions upon the right to strike before a board had been given time to investigate. The Cumberland Railway and Coal Company, anticipating the strike, had been the first applicant under the Act. Previous to the notification from the Department of Labor, the opinion existed among the miners that the coal mines of Nova Scotia did not come within its jurisdiction. Immediately they became aware of their error the lodges turned the tables and began to test it out. In May Pioneer Lodge made application for a board to investigate a dispute between it and the Cumberland Railway and Coal Company, Limited, on two matters, one relating to "level crossing work," the other to "local stone and pillar work." The board, which completed its investigation in July, gave the first point in favor of the men, the second against them. The men refused to accept the verdict and went out on strike August 1.

During June, 1907, applications were made to the Minister of Labor for boards from lodges in Westville, Port Hood, Stelarton, and North Sydney to intervene in disputes involving four different companies and 3,650 workers.<sup>19</sup> The Springhill lodges applied for and were granted further boards in July and Novem-

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 1451.

ber and the following April. In the last case the company refused to have anything to do with the matter, the Department of Labor being forced to name a man to represent the company as well as a chairman. In connection with a more serious difficulty arising under the agreement between the Dominion Coal Company and 7,000 employees, the Grand Master of the Provincial Workmen's Association asked the department for help January, 1908. Through the good offices of a board headed by Professor Adam Shortt, of Queens University, the trouble was settled in a satisfactory manner. At the close the grand officers and the Cape Breton subcouncil of the Provincial Workmen's Association expressed their gratitude for being "delivered from a state of fear and uncertainty" by forwarding an address of thanks to Professor Shortt.

With regard to the act itself, the estimate of its value varied from time to time. At first, due chiefly to the experiences of Springhill, it was held in disfavor. At the annual meeting of the Grand Council, September, 1907, three lodges entered protests against it. It was declared by virtue of its machinery and requirements to favor the employers and to be inferior to the Nova Scotia Arbitration Act. A resolution asking for its repeal was recommended by a committee including John Moffatt and S. B. McNeill, and carried in the Council.<sup>20</sup> Five years later, at the Halifax convention, a resolution was passed approving the principles of the act and its administration and praying for its fullest exercise.<sup>21</sup> It is probable that the operations of the United Mine Workers in the field as a rival labor body may have been a factor in the Provincial Workmen's Association's enthusiasm for the act in the later years.

It will be remembered that in the eighties the Provincial Workmen's Association, led by Robert Drummond, had built great hopes upon compulsory arbitration. The act that finally

<sup>20</sup> Minutes of Grand Council.

<sup>21</sup> *Labor Gazette*, Vol. XIII, 309.

passed the Nova Scotia legislature proved unsatisfactory. No penalty was provided, and public sentiment being lacking, it seems to have been of little use. "The managers," complained Grand Secretary Moffatt in 1905, "repeatedly evaded it." Moreover, the opinion of the Provincial Workmen's Association with regard to the principle of compulsory arbitration had changed. With a lessened regard for the government at Halifax they professed little confidence in decisions that boards appointed by it might make. It was safer, they concluded, to put their dependence in a strong defense fund. The latter was stimulated into life in the first instance by the defeat of the Association in the Sydney steel strike. With slack employment in the mines, the workers had been unable to raise the necessary support from current contributions and were compelled to recognize the weakness of their position as a striking union. The fund, which was only to be drawn upon for major strikes, aimed at a goal of \$50,000 in five years, beginning 1905.<sup>22</sup>

The policy of independent political action had likewise gone out of favor. On the other hand, some attention was being given to the union label for the benefit of non-mining members, but such activities appear to have been confined chiefly to shoes manufactured by Concord Lodge and to printing.

Legislative endeavor continued, though necessarily a large part of it aimed at refinements of acts passed in the earlier period. By amendments of 1905, certificates of competency were required from underground managers, boards of examiners were provided for to grant certificates to shot-firers, and other boards to grant certificates of competency of three grades to stationary engineers. An amendment of 1914 required that no person shall hold a certificate of competency as a manager, underground manager, or overman, who is not a British subject twenty-one years of age and who has not had four years' experience underground in coal mining, one year of which must have been at the

<sup>22</sup> Grand Council Minutes, 1905; also *Labor Gazette*, VI, 370.

working face. The Mechanics Lien Act of 1905 gives liens on mining properties to the extent of two months' wages, guaranteeing priority, whether insolvency comes prior or subsequent to the performing of the labor. Amendments were passed refining former legislation restricting the practice of the companies of retaining any man's wages for debts contracted at the company store.<sup>23</sup> In 1906 an amendment provided for a board of examiners in each district to investigate and report where safety lamps were needed. Further amendments were passed in 1911 and 1912 with regard to the use of safety lamps. In 1906 and 1907 amendments were made with regard to company doctors, it being finally provided that monthly deduction from wages might be made for medical attendance, 25 per cent of the employees being sufficient to name the doctor to whom the money deducted should be paid. In 1912 came an amendment to the Act to Incorporate Lodges, requiring that the property of a lodge, upon its dissolution or ceasing to carry on its work as a subordinate for six months, should pass to the Grand Council. In 1914 an addition to the act was made with respect to the use of electric lights, and another regarding timbering for supports. Also a federal act—the Dominion Explosives Act—was passed providing for the granting of licenses to persons complying with the law and prohibiting the use or preparation of explosives by others. In 1916 an amendment to the provincial act provided for fifty-two pay days per year.

For years the proposition of a shorter work day was persistently pressed for, the demand settling into the form of "eight hours for underground men" and "nine hours for mechanics." The measure was not without its opponents, however, even in the Grand Council. These men argued that the summer season in Nova Scotia, when alone the largest markets could be sup-

<sup>23</sup> Under this law the Dominion Coal Company was twice convicted and fined, 1906-7, for deducting wages without the workmen's consent for debts owing at the company store.

plied, was so short that any restriction on output during this period would mean losing trade to the American competitors. A provincial commission investigating the proposition of an eight-hour day for industry in general, referring particularly to coal mines, reported in 1910 that the peculiar features of the existing Nova Scotia coal market would not permit of the change. Other demands that were continually under discussion were for better "travelling ways" and "riding raikes" in the mines, and more frequent inspection of scales.

Accident benefits were a feature of the miners' organization. Local societies, with two parties contributing, date back to 1880. Such a one existed thus early at Springhill, and accomplished good work with employers and employees paying on a "fifty-fifty" basis. It was not run, however, in connection with the lodge, but covered all employees. Several early experiments, generally unsuccessful, were also tried by various lodges with sickness benefits. In January, 1886, the Nova Scotia Miners' Relief Fund was organized with branches composed exclusively of mine workers and overground employees, the contributions coming at first from two, but, beginning in 1889, from three sources. The Provincial Workmen's Association, while not always primarily responsible for these institutions, was nevertheless active in organizing, and later in consolidating them. Moreover, although it was left to the various lodges and the company managers in each case to decide whether they wanted to take advantage of the act, the Provincial Workmen's Association was prominent in getting the bill through the legislature that brought the government aid. Some variety appears to have existed at different collieries as to the scheme of contributions, sometimes the three parties paying in on a proportional basis, at others, the government—and in some cases also the company—paying a fraction of a cent per ton on the coal mined.

In 1903 an addition to the act provided for a government death allowance of \$50 to the dependents of any miner who, at

the time of decease, had been a member of a relief society and whose relatives were entitled to not less than \$50 from the society. This allowance was increased by amendment in 1912. In the first general report of the Miners' Relief Fund, published in June, 1905, it was announced that the society had at that time fifteen branches and an aggregate surplus of \$73,000; that since organization the total amount paid in had been \$320,459.72, of which the provincial government had contributed \$78,864.93; the coal companies, \$76,364.93; and the members, \$155,229.86.

At the session of the legislature in 1910 a Workmen's Compensation Act was passed, affecting men earning less than \$1,000 (changed to \$1,200 in 1913). Much discussion took place about this time among the miners as to the comparative merits of workmen's compensation and miners' relief, but the lodges generally favored the latter, as it afforded aid whether or not the accident was due to the victim's own fault. But with the year 1915 a new compensation act was passed according to the terms of which the worker did not have to establish the company's guilt in order to benefit from its provisions. The new act was made compulsory to all save those registered in relief societies that were found to afford even more favorable treatment to the worker. Investigation showed that only the employees of one coal company were eligible for exemption.

In February, 1908, as a result of an investigation by a commission composed of Robert Drummond, Grand Master S. B. McNeill, and William Hodge of Springhill, an act was passed organizing all colliery workers into a single provident society providing for old age and total disability pensions, and covering all persons employed in or about coal mines. The commission reported at the time an entire lack of co-operation among the sixteen relief societies of the province. The Provincial Workmen's Association Grand Council, although forward in organizing such societies, had always handed their management over to separate officers and never seriously attempted to deal with relief as a function of the Association.

Other activities cherished by the Provincial Workmen's Association, though not directly maintained by it, were co-operative stores which were operated at the leading mining towns, and mining schools. The latter were established as a result of union effort in 1889, their purpose being to instruct persons wishing to qualify themselves for certificates of competency as managers, overmen, and engineers. In 1905 it was said the majority of men occupying official positions had received their training in these schools. The schools were held in high favor by the miners as affording a measure of opportunity to the workingman, and in 1907, when a new system of technical education was promulgated for the province, they were retained as one of its integral parts.

Certain problems continued to confront the Association, the solution of which carried its endeavors beyond the boundaries of the province. One of these was the matter of tariff duties on coal. The province of Quebec continued, over most of the period, to be the greatest single market for the Nova Scotia product, but in this market it came into direct competition with American coal. A duty on bituminous coal<sup>24</sup> was not sufficiently high to prevent the American product from capturing a large part of the market. The Provincial Workmen's Association became particularly active in 1905, following the close of the Pennsylvania strike, in its attempt to influence the Tariff Commission and to counteract the activities of the Ontario manufacturers and the larger railways, who were working for free coal. A resolution protesting against any lowering of duties and calling for a duty on anthracite was passed by the Grand Council and copies sent to the leading dailies and to members of Parliament.

Another source of much worry and debate which also involved dealing with the federal government was the question of the foreigner. The Legislative Committee reported to the Grand Council in 1905 that the Alien Labor Law passed a short time

<sup>24</sup> This duty amounted to 67 cents per ton on lump product and 14 cents per ton on "slack" in 1909.

before was being well enforced, but it apparently was not altogether satisfactory. At the same time the Association was expressing its views on immigration to the unions of the West through the columns of the *Winnipeg Voice*. Much of the trouble came from British workmen, many of whom in the later period came from Newfoundland, and against whom the language requirements involved in examinations for miners' certificates afforded no protection. Considerable numbers also of Italians were allowed to come into Cape Breton, the miners themselves being agreed that a certain amount of such help was necessary for loading, and relying upon their ignorance of the language to bar them from the mines as certificated workmen. Unfortunately for their plans, however, many foreigners succeeded in getting miners' certificates in spite of the language requirement, with the result that we find the conventions of the Provincial Workmen's Association, in addition to making repeated demands for more stringent examinations, concerning themselves more and more with immigration as the years passed. The organization, however, never reached the point of making a primary issue of the question, as did the Canada Trades and Labor Congress.

The nature of the questions just considered, involving as they do a need of a broad political backing in order to impress the Dominion government, added probably to the hope of securing connection with other miners in Canada, led the Provincial Workmen's Association in 1909 to affiliate with the Canadian Federation of Labor, which at this time was giving promise of drawing together all purely Canadian unions and making a bid for the first place among Canadian organized labor bodies. Grand Secretary Moffatt became president of the Federation in 1911, and S. B. McNeill, vice-president for Nova Scotia. Both the Grand Council and several of the lodges sent delegates regularly to the conventions and contributed to its funds until 1915, when, according to the convention report, both were withheld owing to the "heavy gifts" made to the war by the miners' organ-

ization. Although the affiliation was defended by the grand officers before the Council, it is doubtful if the Provincial Workmen's Association gained what it had hoped from this alliance. In 1917, by virtue of its union with the United Mine Workers, the connection with the Federation formally came to an end.<sup>25</sup>

During 1907 the United Mine Workers were active in organization work in Canada. Eleven new branches were organized in the coal fields of the West during the year. A speaker representing its interests was given a hearing by the Grand Council at the Halifax convention in 1907, but affiliation was not favored. A motion made by a delegate from Drummond Lodge to invite President John Mitchell to come to Nova Scotia or to send Mr. Haggerty to "visit the P.W.A. lodges and inform them fully of the aims and objects and workings of their organization," and that "after the visit a vote be taken on amalgamation," was lost. A special meeting was called at Halifax in May, 1908, to discuss the advisability of amalgamation. Some eight lodges having decided that they would affiliate, the chief executive was taking steps to revoke their charters for disobedience to the expressed will of the order. Though it was not intended that their delegates should be in attendance at this meeting, being advised by legal authority after arriving in Halifax that the revocation would not stand the test of the law, he notified the disloyal lodges and their delegates arrived in time for the second session. The meeting was a stormy one. An attempt was made to overthrow the grand master and grand secretary and to swing the convention. It was pointed out that the Provincial Workmen's Association had shown itself incapable of dealing with the situation at Springhill, and it was charged that a majority at the convention had been bought and sold by the officers. The two

<sup>25</sup> Doubtless the underlying cause of the desire for affiliation was the sense of weakness due to the position of the Association with reference to the chief employer, the Dominion Coal Company, which (in 1908) employed 80 per cent of the whole membership. In 1905 discussion took place with regard to affiliating with the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada.

officers mentioned resigned, but their resignations were refused by a majority vote. It was finally resolved to submit to a referendum of all the voters a choice between an "improved P.W.A." and "affiliation with the U.M.W." The chief points involved in the proposed "improvement" were an increase in dues and initiation fees, and election of the two chief grand officers by popular vote. The result of the referendum taken in the lodges in June, 1908, was a majority of 418 for affiliation.<sup>26</sup>

The regular meeting in September was given up to the question of future relations with the United Mine Workers. By resolution, no action was taken with reference to the minutes of the May meeting, it being held by a vote of 49 to 28 that the action taken at that meeting was unconstitutional and therefore illegal, inasmuch as the delegates had received no instructions from their lodges to bring about a referendum. It was attempted unsuccessfully to amend Article 21 of the constitution, which reads, "This Association cannot be dissolved so long as one lodge with 40 members shall object thereto," by substituting the words, "the majority of the members" for the phrase "one lodge with 40 members." A motion to divide the funds and property was also defeated. A resolution was carried, 47 to 7, condemning the amalgamation agitation as costly and "destructive of the usefulness of the Association," and promising revocation of charters to lodges agitating for any other labor organization than the Provincial Workmen's Association. Revocation of charters, however, brought up the question of the lodges affected giving up

<sup>26</sup> The vote by districts was as follows:

	For P.W.A.	For Affiliation with U.M.W.
Cape Breton . . . . .	1,296	1,888
Inverness . . . . .	418	96
Pictou . . . . .	645	54
Cumberland . . . . .	89	822
	<hr/> 2,448	<hr/> 2,860

The number entitled to vote was approximately 10,000.

their share of the funds, in the hands of the grand officers. About this time an injunction was granted, upon the application of those in favor of affiliation, to restrain the officers of the Association from dealing with the funds of the order. In October this was dissolved by Judge Drysdale, of the Supreme Court. In December Grand Secretary Moffatt was arrested on a charge of perjury in connection with the dissolution, on information laid by certain of the members favoring amalgamation. He was admitted to bond and later committed to trial, where he was honorably acquitted.<sup>27</sup>

During 1908 the Provincial Workmen's Association organized one lodge and disbanded five, while the United Mine Workers organized five branches. Thus the rival organizations lined up for future competition embittered by a background of prejudice and acrid memories. The year 1909 made its contribution to the mutual ill-will in a number of lawsuits instituted against the Provincial Workmen's Association by the seceding lodges for the recovery of property claimed by them. In general these terminated in favor of the Provincial Workmen's Association, but only after considerable legal outlay. During the years that followed the Association was loyally supported by the majority of the miners of the province, but with its face turned in two directions it never felt the security necessary to champion the labor cause the way it had in the past.<sup>28</sup> The situation became a three-cornered one in which the Provincial Workmen's Associa-

<sup>27</sup> *Labor Gazette*, Vol. IX, 532, 641.

<sup>28</sup> The following figures taken from government reports indicate the comparative strength of the two organizations in the years immediately preceding the war:

YEAR	P. W. A.		U. M. W.	
	Lodges	Members	Locals	Member-ship
1911.....	22	4,000	6	"Dormant" 176
1912.....	23	5,000	13	
1913.....	23	5,000	11	
1914.....	20	5,000	.....	

tion, playing conservatively and intrenched upon trade agreements with the larger companies, obtained its ends with comparatively little effort, the operators preferring to make minor sacrifices to it rather than to make the way easy for the further encroachment of the bigger union with its foreign leadership.

The trade agreements with the Dominion Coal Company, which in this period was putting out more than half the coal mined in the province, and which, after its taking over of the Cumberland Railway and Coal Company, was accountable for over two-thirds of the total, date from the beginning of 1905. The first contract, which was for three years, was entered into by the Cape Breton subcouncil and the company management, the latter urging the need at the time of extending the market for Nova Scotia coal. The long strike in the anthracite fields of Pennsylvania had resulted in an abnormally inflated demand, and now that it was over the former markets were inadequate to take the output from the mines with their increased capacity. Promotion of new business, moreover, required quality of product and regularity of output, and it was promised by the men on their part that they would put out coal in as marketable form as possible and that they would work steadily. The agreement was looked upon with hostility by some of the miners on the mainland, but was defended by the grand secretary in his report for the year as being the only hope against a general reduction. This agreement was renewed from time to time to the satisfaction of both parties throughout the life of the Provincial Workmen's Association, although boards were asked for on occasion to settle contested matters within, or not covered by, the contract. Agreements with other companies followed, the arrangement of the terms being assisted in some cases by conciliation boards applied for under the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act.

The bitterest disputes in the history of the coal industry in Nova Scotia came in connection with the attempt of the United Mine Workers to enforce equal recognition for their union. The

contest first presented itself to the public in its true nature when the latter organization, during 1908 and 1909, brought charges of discrimination by three different companies before the before-mentioned boards. In all three cases, however, it failed to secure satisfactory awards, the boards, notably in the famous case involving the Dominion Coal Company in 1909, finding that the charges were not substantiated and upholding the companies in preferring the men with whom they already had agreements.

An incident in connection with the strike waged in Cape Breton against the Dominion Coal Company following the award was a resolution passed by the Canada Trades and Labor Congress condemning the action of the Provincial Workmen's Association and indorsing the United Mine Workers, and finally calling upon the Dominion government to appoint a commission to investigate the reasons for the calling out of the militia. It appears that during the strike much bitterness was displayed between the two bodies, and when the Mayor of Glace Bay protested against the soldiers being sent into the strike district, the Provincial Workmen's Association took exception to the protest and urged the dispatching of troops in order that their members who desired to work would be accorded proper protection.<sup>29</sup>

Allied to the question of recognition, one of the prominent matters in dispute in these 1909-10 difficulties related to the "check-off" system of collecting dues. With several of the companies the Provincial Workmen's Association had succeeded in establishing this arrangement whereby the company made such collections from the list furnished by the grand secretary. Hospital and doctors' dues, as well as those due to the union, were thus collected.<sup>30</sup> The United Mine Workers was now pressing for the same services.

A full account of the activities in the province of the United Mine Workers is not appropriate at this point. In touching

<sup>29</sup> *Fourth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 106.

<sup>30</sup> "Ackland Report, 1909," *Labor Gazette*, Vol. X, 678.

the lasting hostility between the two organizations, however, it may be pertinent to mention the following incidents. In expectation of the renewal of the agreement between the Provincial Workmen's Association and the Dominion Coal Company, in November, 1911, resolutions were passed by meetings of United Mine Workers members in Glace Bay and Sydney mines and by certain local branches declaring against being bound by any agreement between the company and the "defunct P.W.A." unless a substantial increase of wages was secured. Some of the resolutions charged the Provincial Workmen's Association leaders with being henchmen of the company and betrayers of the working class, and declared that the Association had been voted out of existence on June 24, 1908, by its members.<sup>31</sup> Further evidence of the continuing hostility is afforded by reminders uttered in the Grand Council meetings of the Provincial Workmen's Association in 1913 and 1915 to the effect that business should not be discussed outside the lodges as it was being used against the Provincial Workmen's Association by its enemies. In 1916 the grand secretary advised against any return to the general closed shop policy of former years, as "there were men among them who sought to destroy and whom the lodges would not take back."

The rapid rise in the cost of living during the war years, at the same time that coal prices were held down by long-time contracts and operators' income was affected by the loss of much of the Montreal market through high freights, brought a severe strain upon the trade agreements between the Provincial Workmen's Association and the operators. General increases had been obtained in 1916, but almost immediately the workers began to agitate for more. Sydney Mines Lodge declared for 30 per cent in November and asked the grand officers to interview the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company to that end. This mission as well as similar interviews with the Dominion Coal Company proving

<sup>31</sup> *Labor Gazette*, Vol. XII, pp. 11, 487.

fruitless, a special meeting of the Cape Breton subcouncil was called in March, the outcome of which was an application to Ottawa for a board to investigate the difficulties between the miners and the Dominion Coal Company at Glace Bay. The Department of Labor, having about the same time received an application from the United Mine Workers naming wages and working conditions and alleged discrimination as the causes of difficulty, by virtue of the division between the employees into two unions, decided to send instead a royal commission with orders to extend its investigations to Sydney mines and Springhill. The commission, composed of Justice Chisholm, of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court, John Forrest, D.D., and J. T. Joy, of the Longshoremen's Association of Halifax, reported with respect to the disputes at Glace Bay that it found the causes of unrest to be principally two, viz., "First, a feeling of discord resulting from the presence in the same field of two rival labor organizations. This feeling interfered in many ways with the successful prosecution of the industry in the different collieries and produced widespread friction and irritation. Second, a matter of wages. . . ."

The latter the commission settled by granting increases under agreement to last to December 31, 1917, and from year to year thereafter unless either of the parties gave notice of termination two months previous to December 31. As for the first, after several days' conference it succeeded in persuading the leaders of the two organizations "to agree to the establishment of a new organization . . . . to absorb the membership of the two existing ones. . . ."

In accord with this the grand secretary at the last meeting of the Provincial Workmen's Association held at Sydney in June, 1917, read a resolution for dissolution of the Provincial Workmen's Association, asking for legislation to that effect and providing that all money and property should be transferred to the new union, "if it is formed and conducted on the basis agreed to before the Commission, viz., a

purely provincial union." The last clause was further elaborated in the resolution, naming, as a condition precedent to any such action, freedom "from entanglement or connection with any union whose officers and headquarters are outside of the province." The property of the Association, amounting to \$16,672.45 in addition to considerable real estate, was vested in Mr. Moffatt as trustee, pending the formation of the new union, and three provisional officers were appointed for a six months' term to act with the same number from the United Mine Workers in carrying the resolution into effect. During this time a constitution and by-laws were to be drawn up, the local lodges fused, and elections of permanent officers were to take place. Thus it was that the Provincial Workmen's Association, actuated in large measure by feelings of obligation to keep industry running in war time, yielded to a plan that called for a compromise of its policies and that eventually led to a forfeiture of the independent unionism of the Nova Scotia miners. The Provincial Workmen's Association and the United Mine Workers of Nova Scotia united to become the Amalgamated Mine Workers of Nova Scotia. Inside of two years the new union, in spite of the stipulations named in the last meeting of the Provincial Workmen's Association and calculated to guard against the foreign connection, became affiliated with the United Mine Workers of America.

## CHAPTER IV

### TRADE-UNION DEVELOPMENT SINCE 1902: ORGANIZATION, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY

#### I. GROWTH AND DISTRIBUTION OF LOCALS

The development of trade unionism in a nation is partly a matter of accession of numbers and partly a matter of evolving a system (or systems) of organization through which the workers may be held together for effective co-operative action rather than working at cross-purposes in unco-ordinated and inharmonious groups. In the present chapter, as in the last, attention will be given to both aspects of the development of the movement in Canada.

We have already noted that the close of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of organization in Canada at a rate unprecedented up to that time, and that at the end of July, 1902, there were 1,078 locals in the country. With the rapid development of the country and the increased use of paid organizers, this expansion was to go on steadily until the outbreak of the World War. The high-water marks of annual increase for the earlier decade were the years 1903 and 1907, during which, respectively, net gains in locals of 221 and 174 were realized. The panic of 1907 and depression following it were more than counteracted by the organizing efforts of the time and the enthusiasm over proposed political action. Consequently 1908 showed gains greater than either 1909 or 1910. At the close of 1913 there were in the Dominion 2,017 local unions with a membership of 175,799. The losses due to war recruiting and the depression that lay upon the country, particularly in the West, account for a set-back in 1914 and 1915. But 1916, with its war prosperity and rising prices, ushered in a period of rapid

organization. Each year brought its respectable additions, and finally 1919 broke all records by adding 130,000 workers to the organized ranks. At the close of the year the statistics show 378,047 members, a figure more than double that at the close of 1913. The break in prices in the spring of 1920 and consequent unemployment and depression covering the years 1921 and 1922, and doubtless to some degree the disruptive effects of the One Big Union secession in the West, are reflected in the falling figures of these years. The exact totals of membership and num-

TABLE V  
SHOWING NUMBER OF UNIONS BY PROVINCES IN SUCCESSIVE  
DECENNIAL YEARS

	1902	1912	1922
Maritime provinces.....	138	228	270
Quebec.....	151	245	351
Ontario.....	547	756	1,044
Manitoba.....	46	139	134
Saskatchewan (territory 1902).....	35	113	163
Alta (territory 1902).....	.....	152	209
British Columbia.....	161	249	235
	1,078	1,883	2,406

ber of locals at the end of each year since 1911 are presented below on page 130.

The statistics for 1902 as given in Table V show Ontario with more than half the total unions of Canada, British Columbia second, and Quebec third. West of the Great Lakes there were only 242 locals, or something less than one-quarter of the total. The maritime provinces together had 138, or less than one-seventh. A decade later, while Quebec and the maritime provinces bore about the same relation to the total for the Dominion, the western provinces had gained greatly relatively to Ontario. The most noticeable feature in recent years has been the decline, not only proportionally but also absolutely, in the provinces of British Columbia and Manitoba, beginning after

1918. The reasons for this are to be found again in the two factors of industrial depression, which has borne particularly on the young industries of British Columbia, and the disruptive effects of hostile organization.

Another comparison, which is not to be derived from the table, but which is of significance in indicating the broadening basis of union organization, is to be found in the lessening proportion of unions located in the leading cities. While Toronto maintained its ratio and Montreal made gains disproportionate to those of the country as a whole, the total for the ten leading cities advanced only from 658 to 760 in the decade 1912 to 1922, representing thus an advance of 15.5 per cent as against a gain of 27.7 per cent for the whole Dominion.

It has been indicated in earlier chapters how unionism in Canada began in the printing and boot and shoe trades; how in the fifties English unions began to establish branches in the engineering and building trades; and how in the next three decades, while organization continued along these lines, stimulated by American competition, the lead in numbers went to the organizations in the railway industry. Finally, toward the end of the century, we have noted how the unions in the metal trades developed in importance; how mining, both of metals and of coal, began to be organized in British Columbia in addition to the already well-established unions in the Nova Scotia coal fields, and how beginnings were made in the woodworking, clothing, and tobacco industries, and among the public employees and general laborers. In general the promise of the closing years of the period considered in the last chapter was carried out in the period now under review, until the dislocation of industry due to the prolongation of the war brought stagnation to the building trades and led to an unprecedented extension of organization among common laborers.

The statistics before 1914 do not afford any adequate basis for calculating the comparative membership in different trades

or groups for the Dominion. Figures are given, however, indicating the number of unions, in certain chosen groups, formed and dissolved each year for the period 1903-10. Out of a net gain of 694 organizations formed during this period, the building trades, with 135, took first place. Their gains were consistent throughout but dropped to a low ebb during the years 1908-10. The railway brotherhoods made large additions in the three years 1907-9, but at other times showed less tendency to expansion. The metal-trades group, though registering a decline in 1905 and 1906, showed a total increase of 112 locals. The most spectacular exhibition of the period is seen in the general transport group, which added fifty-three unions in 1903 and lost 32 two years later. The rapid turnover in this case is explained largely by the activities of the Maintenance of Way employees. The printing trades gained rather consistently, and the textile group organized twenty locals during 1906 and 1907.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1914 the Department of Labor began to publish percentages of total union membership, by groups of organizations in closely related trades, in its annual report on organized labor, and these, as collected from the various publications, are submitted in Table VI. The figures for 1914 may fairly be assumed to serve as an index of what the years immediately preceding would show, had we statistics for them. Depression, it is true, was setting in, but the war had not yet had time to change the proportions to any great extent. Some of the more significant points to be noted from these percentages are: (1) The maintenance of the leadership by the railway employees throughout the period except for the phenomenal expansion of the "other trades and General Labor" group in the two years of abnormal organization immediately after the war; (2) the apparent constancy of membership in the printing trades group throughout the decade, its percentage falling in those years when organization as a whole was flourishing and rising again as the total

<sup>1</sup> *Labor Gazettes*, espec. XI, 957.

figures declined in 1921-22; (3) the relative numerical importance to which the last three groups had attained by 1914 as compared with the long-organized apprenticeship trades represented by the printing, building, and metal-trades groups; and (4) the serious decline in the building trades group during the first two years of the war to less than half their original percentage, a phenomenon which, with its continuance down to 1924, is

TABLE VI  
SHOWING BY SUCCESSIVE YEARS THE PERCENTAGES OF MEMBERSHIP  
BY DIFFERENT GROUPS

Year	Rail- road Em- ployees	Building Trades	Metal Trades	Mining and Quarry- ing	Print- ing Trades	Cloth- ing, Boots, and Shoes	Trans- porta- tion Other than Railways and Navi- ga- tion	Public Em- ployees, Personal Service, and Amuse- ment Trades	All Other Trades and General Labor
1914.....	24.90	18.90	8.60	8.70	4.70	7.00	8.00	8.20	10.70
1915.....	27.90	14.20	8.50	9.60	4.90	6.60	6.30	8.70	12.10
1916.....	30.50	9.40	9.50	9.40	4.50	10.80	7.80	7.00	10.50
1917.....	28.50	10.10	11.90	10.50	4.30	7.40	7.40	3.20	16.60
1918.....	28.30	13.40	13.10	9.50	3.80	6.00	8.80	5.40	11.70
1919.....	23.40	10.60	11.10	4.60	2.40	5.50	6.30	5.40	29.40
1920.....	24.90	10.62	9.00	6.03	2.49	5.50	7.68	7.17	26.57
1921.....	26.22	9.78	7.38	6.81	2.63	5.98	8.75	7.94	24.45
1922.....	28.53	10.02	7.84	8.46	2.93	6.19	7.11	9.53	19.38
1923.....	27.52	10.32	6.12	8.98	2.75	5.60	8.23	9.43	21.02

to be explained by the lack of active building operations during the whole period.

## II. DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY ORGANIZATION

### I. THE INTERNATIONALS

The story of the organization of locals into secondary bodies and of these again into federations for the accomplishment of purposes common to still larger groups has, since the beginning of the twentieth century, been marred by banishments, secessions, and rivalries, with the result that the structure of Canadian labor, as depicted in the government reports, suggests a

conglomerate of factions rather than a movement capable of organic action. Closer investigation, while it discloses a schematic arrangement of lesser bodies into greater according to the principles of nationality, religion, class-philosophy, or trade-consciousness, fails to dispel the first impression of complexity. Much the largest section of organized labor in Canada, however, and the movement that has been recognized by the federal government in its appointments to the international labor conferences, is that formed of extensions of the North American internationals, and hence largely connected with the American Federation of Labor. The grave problem for this group has been to evolve adequate machinery of organization to relate the Canadian sections to the main continental movement and at the same time not compromise their national autonomy. As a consequence of this difficulty and the efforts to solve it, the Canadian branch of the international movement has not been without its internal oppositions and complications, resulting at times in the birth of new secessionist groups. Added to this has been the problem of finding a place for the English unions whose branches for many years were connected only for certain purposes with their British headquarters.

When we leave the international movement and come to examine the various dissenting federations we find them standing in hostile separation, not only from the continental movement, but also with respect to one another. The scheme of presentation to be adopted henceforth aims to follow the same lines as that in chapter ii. Having dealt already with the formation of locals, we shall now concern ourselves with the higher planes of organization, considering first the development of the craft and industrial bodies; second, the intermediate delegated bodies; and third, the larger federations and more centralized unions which pretend to sovereign power in the labor field. For the present we shall study the evolution of organization by craft and by industry, centering our attention first upon the American internationals.

It has already been pointed out that the great body of the craft unions at the end of the century were branches of organizations with headquarters in the United States. Following the action of the Trades and Labor Congress at the Berlin convention of 1902, a rival body was formed dedicated to the idea of stimulating national craft unions and building up a purely Canadian movement, but, as a later chapter will show, it has never, up to now, succeeded in offering an effective challenge to the internationals.<sup>2</sup> In 1903, again, certain socialist organizations, themselves under American leadership, entered British Columbia and attempted to break up the railway brotherhoods' organizations connected with the Canadian Pacific Railway and to establish a system of radical unionism among the miners and railway employees of the West. The effort is important for us here, not so much on account of its own successes as for the lasting impression that it left on the labor outlook in British Columbia, and for the discredit that it brought, in certain quarters, upon foreign unionism in general through the absentee leadership and the high-handed methods alleged to have been used during the great strikes which were staged at the time.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless the internationals continued to make headway. At the close of 1910, out of a grand total for the whole country of 1,752 organizations, 1,520 were branches of internationals. At the end of 1918 the number was 1897 in a total of 2,247 for the Dominion, and the international membership was 201,432 out of a total of 248,887. During 1919 the international proportion dropped considerably, due to the secession in favor of the One Big Union in the West and to the rapid rise of the National Catholic Union in Quebec, but with the dwindling of the One Big Union forces in the years subsequent, the ratio of 1918 has again been approached. For a more detailed comparison the reader is referred to Table VII, on following page.

Figures not given in this table are those for the number of

<sup>2</sup> Chap. viii.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 151-53.

internationals which have established branches in Canada. In 1911 there were 78 such organizations; in 1918 there were 96. At the end of 1922, out of a total of 135 international organiza-

TABLE VII

Year	Total Trade-Union Membership in Canada	Total Number of Locals	Total International Membership in Canada	Total Number of International Locals	Total Membership in Branches Affiliated with Non-international Bodies	Number of Locals Affiliated with Non-international Bodies	Membership in Independent Locals	Number of Independent Locals
1912.....	160,120	1,883	136,389	1,638	15,616	217	18,115	28
1913.....	175,799	2,017	149,577	1,792	20,215	191	6,007	34
1914.....	166,163	2,003	140,482	1,774	20,935	.....	4,746	.....
1915.....	143,343	1,883	114,722	1,661	23,664	191	4,957	31
1916.....	160,407	1,842	129,123	1,626	22,884	189	8,400	27
1917.....	204,630	1,974	164,896	1,702	32,343	244	7,391	28
1918.....	248,887	2,274	201,432	1,897	37,928	332	9,527	45
1919.....	378,047	2,847	260,247	2,309	33,372	325	8,278	29
					*35,000	83	.....	.....
					†41,150	101	.....	.....
1920.....	373,842	2,918	267,247	2,455	25,406	259	\$31,189	30
					*45,000	124	.....	.....
					†5,000	50	.....	.....
1921.....	313,320	2,668	222,896	2,223	24,480	264	\$15,644	27
					*45,000	120	.....	.....
					†5,300	34	.....	.....
1922.....	276,621	2,512	206,150	2,108	*22,973	272	9,063	25
					†38,335	106	.....	.....
1923.....	278,092	2,487	203,843	2,079	*34,315	278	9,934	24
					†30,000	106	.....	.....

\* These figures, showing for the last four years only, represent the membership of the national Catholic group which previously were included under the heading "non-international" in the government reports.

† These are the figures given for the One Big Union.

‡ This membership was included in sixteen bodies, the other twelve failing to make returns.

§ The heavy proportion of change is largely accounted for by the operations in the West of the Lumber Workers, who broke with the One Big Union on a question of organization during 1920 and subsequently lost very heavily in membership.

tions operating on the North American continent, 91 had branches in Canada. Although we have spoken of the internationals as craft unions, the term is intended to include such organizations as the United Mine Workers, the Western Federation of Miners, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, which organize the workers in the mines and those engaged in clothes production by industry rather than by craft.

In 1923 the ten organizations, all internationals, which had the largest membership in Canada, were the following:

	Members
United Mine Workers of America . . . . .	22,800
Railroad Trainmen, Brotherhood of . . . . .	14,526
Railroad Employees, Canadian Brotherhood of . . . . .	13,290
Railroad Carmen, Brotherhood of . . . . .	10,853
Maintenance-of-Way Employees and Railway Shop Laborers, United Brotherhood of . . . . .	10,000
International Association of Machinists . . . . .	9,382
Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, Brotherhood of . . . . .	7,846
Amalgamated Clothing Workers . . . . .	7,715
Carpenters and Joiners, United Brotherhood of . . . . .	7,603
Railway Employees of America, Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric . . . . .	7,500

For many years the first place was held by the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen. In 1917 this distinction went to the International Brotherhood of Maintenance-of-Way Employees, and then, after one year, to the International Association of Machinists. During 1920 the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners forged to the front, with the Brotherhood of Railroad Carmen second. The United Mine Workers only took its place among the leaders after absorbing the Amalgamated Mine Workers of Nova Scotia in 1918. An organization which stood among the leaders before the war in numbers and in influence, but which today has a following of only 4,500, was the Bricklayers', Masons', and Plasterers' International. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers has for some years numbered about 7,000. An interesting feature of the situation that should be noted is that the ten organizations listed included in 1923 considerably more than a third of the whole trade-union membership of the country.

The scope of this work will not permit separate accounts of the history of the growth and development in Canada of these various international bodies, but the following examples will prove illuminating.

The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, the largest union in the building trades, is, in Canada, as well as the United States, the result of the weaving together of two strands whose identity has by no means been lost. As we have seen, the English organization, called the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, began to establish branches in Canada more than sixty years ago, their advent being one of the earliest of the non-Canadian organizations. Throughout the century this body played an important rôle in Canadian unionism. By 1912 it had forty-nine branches and a membership of 4,430. All of these branches operated under one executive board with headquarters at Toronto. In the early eighties the American body, known as the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, entered Canada, forming their first branches at Hamilton, Toronto, and St. Catherine's. Its membership in Canada grew rapidly, and Toronto and Vancouver were among the earlier cities in which it was successful in carrying into effect its program for an eight-hour day. In 1903 Canada was given permanent representation on its executive board. By 1912 there were north of the boundary line some eighty branches of this union with a membership in the neighborhood of 9,000. While the two organizations drew their following from the same craft and worked frequently side by side in the same territory, they seem on the whole to have had amicable relations in Canada prior to their amalgamation. Both were affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and each paid dues to the Canada Trades Congress on its Canadian Membership. In 1906 they collaborated in carrying to a successful conclusion a strike at Toronto involving 1,200 workers. While both sides saw the advantages of amalgamation and sought through direct negotiations to bring it about, the basis for the same was not easy to arrive at. Finally, the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor proposed definite terms of union. The British organization declining to accept the conditions, the American Federation of Labor, under instruc-

tions of the Atlanta convention, revoked its charter in August, 1912. A few weeks later a delegate of the United Brotherhood, at the convention of the Trades and Labor Congress, brought in a resolution to oust its rival from recognition by that body, but the motion was defeated by a vote of 124 to 76.<sup>4</sup> In April of 1913, however, the Executive Council of the congress gave notice that it could no longer hold in affiliation under such circumstances any organization that was not recognized by the American Federation of Labor, and accordingly the Amalgamated Society's Canadian following was barred. Negotiations looking to union were renewed by officials of the two bodies, and on May 7, 1913, at a meeting of representatives at Cleveland, Ohio, an agreement was reached and signed, which, after ratification by referendum vote of both organizations, furnished the basis of their amalgamation January 1, 1914. It is noteworthy that while the United Brotherhood approved the plan of amalgamation by a vote of 31,438 as against 15,417, and while the Amalgamated membership in the United States indorsed it by 1,670 to 452, the Canadian district, in a lukewarm poll, cast 849 votes against as opposed to 928 in favor. The terms of the agreement provided that:

All branches of the Amalgamated Society shall be registered as local unions of the United Brotherhood and shall receive charters gratis . . . .; The beneficial system of the Amalgamated . . . . shall be retained and controlled by them under its rules and stipulations as prescribed in its constitution; [but that the United Brotherhood is given] complete and absolute control of all questions relative to and a part of the militant and economic trades union movement only, in the United States . . . . Canada and . . . . Mexico.

Further, it was provided that members in good standing of either organization should thereafter be admitted to all the trade privileges of the other upon their arrival within the jurisdiction

<sup>4</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 68.

of that other without payment of initiation fees. "The union does not in any way affect the financial system of the Amalgamated Society, or the manner in which the business of its local branches is carried on; nor does it affect the position of the members of the Amalgamated Society with the headquarters in Manchester, England." But after January 1, 1914, the name of the Amalgamated Society was to be withdrawn from North America and there was to be only one union in the carpentering craft in that territory, the local branches of the English society becoming local unions of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners with the affix "Amalgamated Section" after the number of the union.<sup>5</sup> Section 11 of the agreement provides that in the event of any contention arising in the practical application of the plan, the general president and the general secretary of the United Brotherhood and the district president and district secretary of the Amalgamated Section "are authorized to render an interpretation which shall be binding on all concerned."

"It was understood," says the government report for 1922, "that the members of both bodies were working in harmony," but during the year a dispute arose in Toronto as to whether or not a member of the Amalgamated Section had the right to hold the office of treasurer of the District Council of Toronto. The question being referred to the general president of the United Brotherhood, the general executive board of that body ruled that "inasmuch as a member holding membership in a local branch of the Amalgamated Society does not pay the full per capita tax of the Brotherhood he was not eligible to hold the office of secretary or treasurer of a district council because he would be the custodian of the funds of the council, and as such he would have charge of the disbursing of the general funds of the organization sent for the purpose of assisting members when involved in a strike or lockout."<sup>6</sup> Five Toronto lodges of the

<sup>5</sup> *Third Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> *Twelfth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 236.

Amalgamated group refusing to recognize this decision were suspended, and forthwith began operating under the charters originally issued from England. Further cause of disagreement between the two organizations, supposed to be happily wed, is found in the refusal of the executive of the United Brotherhood to grant charters to newly formed branches of the Amalgamated Society, it being contended that only those branches of the latter which were in existence at the time when the plan of amalgamation became effective were entitled to receive charters from the Brotherhood. At the end of 1922 there were six other local branches of the Amalgamated Society in addition to the five suspended Toronto branches, operating with no authority from the Brotherhood, but holding charters from the Amalgamated Society and co-ordinating their efforts under a "management committee." At the end of 1923, fifteen of the thirty local lodges of the Amalgamated were not identified with the American organization.

These exponents of the resurrection of British unionism in the carpentering trade in Canada are bitter in their denunciation of what they allege to be the attempt of the American union, ever since the death of President Kirby, in 1915, to eliminate the Amalgamated from Canada, and they have lost no occasion to capitalize the prevailing sentiment against domination by foreign labor leaders. On the face of it, it looks as if the Amalgamated Section must needs be a diminishing factor under the agreement as interpreted by the officers of the Brotherhood. In the first two years of war they dropped from fifty-one branches to thirty, and, with no right to take out any new charters, each loss was final with no hope of compensation.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> On July 1, 1925, the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners withdrew from Canada and the United States, granting complete self-government to the branches on this side of the Atlantic. Subsequently the Canadian membership set up an organization under the name of the Amalgamated Carpenters of Canada, the former Canadian executive board of the parent body becoming the administration for the new union. The new organization has eighteen branches and

The United Brotherhood of Carpenters, in addition to local organization, was operating in Canada at the close of 1922 through provincial district councils in Quebec and Ontario and through ten lesser district councils whose jurisdictions center in and around important cities.<sup>8</sup> It is no longer affiliated with either the American Federation of Labor or the Canada Trades Congress, having retired from the former on account of adverse decisions in jurisdictional disputes in 1920, and subsequently from the congress. While still ranking among the leaders, the carpenters' brotherhood lost half its Canadian membership in the two years 1920-22. At the close of the former year it had a following of 16,670 members.

The International Association of Machinists resembles the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners in that it represents a fusion of English and American elements. Like the British Society of Carpenters, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers antedated the American body, the original International Association of Machinists, both in Canada and the United States. Its Canadian branches, along with those south of the boundary, were for a long time affiliated with the parent organization in England through the common North American executive located at New York. Later the affairs of the locals in Canada were administered by a Canadian executive council which was vested with the necessary powers while subject to the central executive council in England. The Amalgamated Society, inasmuch as its jurisdictional claims brought it into competition with the International Association of Machinists, was constitutionally barred from affiliation with the American Federation of Labor and the Canada Trades Congress. For many years it was connected with the Canadian Federation of Labor.

The relations between the rival bodies were not at all times

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is affiliated with the Canadian Federation of Labor. See *Fifteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 35, 43, 228.

<sup>8</sup> For discussion of district councils, see chap. v.

happy. As early as 1906 a resolution was introduced by a Toronto delegate of the International Association of Machinists at the annual convention of the Canada Trades and Labor Congress requesting that body to take action toward getting the British Trades Congress to bring its influence to bear upon the Amalgamated Society to come to some understanding with the International Association of Machinists "to prevent, in future, any more unfortunate conflicts between the two organizations."<sup>9</sup>

Although the convention concurred in this resolution, little seems to have come of it at the time. Not until 1919 was effectual action taken, and then it came from the parties themselves, the American body taking the lead. In June of that year its executive council sent two representatives to England to attend the convention of the Amalgamated Society instructed to bring about if possible an amalgamation of the Canadian and United States members of that organization with the International Association of Machinists. Subsequently the British society appointed a mission to visit America and investigate. This delegation visited the Canadian and American branches, and continued negotiations with the executive board of the Association of Machinists at Washington during the autumn of 1919. In its report to its headquarters in London in January, 1920, it expressed the view that the Amalgamated Society could never become a dominant factor on the American continent, and its members unanimously recommended that the English body should cease to function as an industrial organization in North America. Following this recommendation the Amalgamated Society issued instructions to the Canadian and American branches to wind up their affairs at the end of the fiscal year. Provision was made that members might continue with the parent body if they so desired by sending their contributions direct to the general office in London, from whence the payment of benefits

<sup>9</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 51.

would be made. The Canadian executive council, however, and the twenty-four local lodges, passed out of existence at this time.<sup>10</sup> The event is especially significant as practically marking the elimination of British unionism in Canada at the hands of the American after a common occupation of the territory for half a century. The Canadian membership of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers at the time of the withdrawal of the organization was in the vicinity of 3,000. The International Association of Machinists does not show in its totals of membership in Canada any permanent gains from the extinction of its rival. Although raised to 111 branches with over 17,000 members at the close of 1919 (the figures apparently include the Amalgamated following although the deal was not yet consummated), it fell to 107 branches with 14,123 members in 1920, and two years later numbered only 93 branches with a membership of 8,400. The slump, however, is to be explained by other causes, notably its relations with the One Big Union, involving wholesale secessions.

Like the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, the International Association of Machinists organizes for certain purposes through intermediate geographic and industrial units. One of these is a provincial council, that of Ontario; the others are called district lodges, and of these there were five in 1922. District Lodge No. 2, which includes in its membership all local lodges of the Association whose members are employed in Canadian railway shops, has the largest following, with 62 branches as affiliates and a total membership of 5,700 (1922). The rest of the district lodges are territorial in jurisdiction.

The various railway organizations have entered the Dominion at different times, the older brotherhoods of engineers and conductors, as we have seen, began establishing branches in the sixties, the enginemen and firemen in the later seventies, the railway trainmen and maintenance-of-way employees in the

<sup>10</sup> *Tenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 101.

next two decades, and other bodies not until the present century. In general it seems that in each case the more important bodies found their way into Canada soon after their formation and expanded coincidentally with the extension of railway building. One organization, however, by virtue of a history which stands in contrast to that of any other, demands special consideration before we pass from the topic. The Canadian Brotherhood of Railroad Employees is primarily a Canadian body, having been formed at Moncton, New Brunswick, the headquarters of the Intercolonial Railway, on October 12, 1908, and incorporated under the laws of Canada July 7, 1909. The grand division, as the chief governing body is called, claimed jurisdiction during its earlier years over Canada and Newfoundland, and all railway employees over eighteen years of age were declared eligible for membership. In the course of time, however, its organizing activities were limited to such railway employees as clerks, freight-handlers, foremen, checkers and porters, baggage-masters, parlor, sleeping-, and dining-car service employees, locomotive wipers, cranemen, and laborers. For several years, while still a non-international union, it co-operated with and exchanged working cards with the Brotherhood of Railroad Station Employees, an organization with headquarters in Boston whose membership in some degree covered in American territory working groups similar to those of the Canadian body north of the line, and which itself had no branches in Canada. In 1917 its jurisdiction was extended, permitting the grand-division officers to grant charters in any country, thus changing it from a national to an international body. In November of the same year it became affiliated with the Trades and Labor Congress, and a little later its head office was removed from Halifax to Ottawa. In 1918 a jurisdictional dispute arose between it and the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees, an international union which also was paying a per capita tax to the congress on

its Canadian membership. The congress, after using its best offices to effect an amalgamation of the two, and finding no possibilities of success on account of the Canadian body insisting on the principle of national autonomy, revoked the charter of the Canadian brotherhood in December, 1920, on the ground that said charter had only been issued with the understanding that the body would not seek to secure as members workmen who were eligible for membership in any international organization chartered with the American Federation of Labor and recognized by the Trades and Labor Congress, and also that such members as the brotherhood possessed who were eligible for membership in existing international unions would be transferred to such international bodies.

Immediately the executive of the brotherhood was notified of this act of the congress it took legal action to prevent the revocation of its charter, and secured a favorable judgment, the Supreme Court of Ontario handing down the decision that the congress executive had exceeded its powers under the constitution.<sup>11</sup> At the 1921 convention of the congress, however, held some months later, the action of the executive was made authoritative by a resolution of revocation and the cancellation of all rights and privileges previously held by the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees. The case is interesting, not only for its effects upon the complexion of organization among the railway bodies in Canada, but also for the light that it sheds on the practical application of certain provisions in the constitution of the congress to dual unionism involving a national and an international body.<sup>12</sup> In this incident, more clearly than in the cancellation of the charters of seceders to the One Big Union, it reasserted its policy as laid down in 1902 of serving first the trade-union movement of the continent; after that, the movement of the nation. The Canadian brotherhood, while poten-

<sup>11</sup> *Tenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 97-101.

<sup>12</sup> *Eleventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 104-5.

tially international, had at the end of 1922 established only one branch outside of the Dominion. Within Canada, on the other hand, it has grown to be an extensive order, being classed "as the strongest single labor body with headquarters in the country," and ranking third among all organizations. From 46 branches and 3,500 members in 1912, it had grown to 89 branches with 10,220 members in 1918, and at the close of 1922 had 148 locals with 12,567 members. Its success in the face of ably sponsored competition would seem to point to possibilities of national organization in the railway industry in Canada. Its stronghold before the war was in the maritime provinces and Quebec, but in recent years its center of gravity has passed to Ontario.

Organization in the mining industry in Canada today, as in the United States, is confined almost entirely to the two international bodies, the United Mine Workers of America and the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, and of these the latter appears to retain little more than the shell of what was once an effective organization.

In the first period of its expansion the Western Federation of Miners, as the last-named body was formerly called, entered British Columbia in 1895, when it established a branch at Rossland. During the next few years it added a number of others among the metal miners, for the most part by receiving into affiliation independent local bodies that were already in existence. By 1899 there were branches sufficient in number to permit the formation of District Union No. 6. Three years later District Union No. 7 was established upon a basis of branches among the coal miners of the eastern part of the province. This district body, however, existed for only one year, dissolving in November, 1903, when District Union No. 18 of the United Mine Workers was formed in the same territory and all the locals that had formerly comprised District Union No. 7 of the Federation went over in a body to the newcomer. In 1906 the

Western Federation entered the province of Ontario with the organization of local Union No. 146 among the cobalt miners. It also had a following in the early years of the century among the coal owners of Vancouver Island. The course of its development and decay in Canada as elsewhere has been affected from time to time by its relations with other labor organizations. In 1898 it severed its connection with the American Federation of Labor and affiliated with the American Labor Union, a relation which seems to have been instrumental in part in involving its branches in the Crow's Nest Pass coal region in a serious strike in the winter of 1903, and doubtless affected its subsequent history in more ways than one. A few years later it was torn by internal strife both in British Columbia and Montana through encouragement given by a part of its members to organizers of the Industrial Workers of the World.

A third organization which brought trouble to the Federation was the United Mine Workers. At the outset the policy of both bodies was to include in their membership coal as well as metalliferous miners, a course which naturally involved them in many jurisdictional disputes. In some of the mines in British Columbia both organizations had their followers. Finally, in 1908, an arrangement was made between the two organizations whereby a division of jurisdiction was effected, the United Mine Workers confining its activities to the interests of the coal industry, and the Western Federation to metalliferous miners, and provision was made for the exchange of transfer cards. In 1910 a further agreement provided for still closer relations through (1) co-operation of organizers, and (2) through the Federation affiliating once more with the American Federation of Labor, and the two bodies working together in a mining department to be established under the jurisdiction of the latter. In accordance with this arrangement the Western Federation obtained a charter from the American Federation of Labor in the following year. These events, while not being limited in their

effects to the Canadian branches of the organization, are recited here because they apply particularly to the British Columbia fields, where the jurisdictions had been seriously interlocking.

The statistics indicate that the Federation reached its maximum membership in Canada in 1912, when in its twenty branches it had a following of 5,947 members, divided probably about equally between Ontario and British Columbia. After 1918 its membership fell off rapidly, due in part to a general weakening of the organization everywhere, and in part to the activities of the One Big Union. In 1918 it had seventeen branches with 3,857 members; in 1920, eight branches with a membership of 420; and the figures for 1922 show a still further reduction.

The United Mine Workers of America is at the present time established in the coal fields of Nova Scotia and of eastern British Columbia and Alberta. District unions Nos. 26 and 18, respectively, maintain subordinate jurisdiction over the locals in each of these fields.

According to the record of the Department of Labor, the first local branch in Canada was formed in Fernie, British Columbia, in 1902. The parent organization was at that time twelve years old and had a membership in the United States of over 175,000. In 1903, as we have already seen, District Union No. 18 was formed largely at the expense of the Western Federation of Miners, but it soon expanded to include an area much wider than its predecessor, claiming at the outbreak of the World War no less than twenty-one locals. Some years later the United Mine Workers' organization was threatened with extinction in this area at the hands of the One Big Union. The district charter was withdrawn, and for a space of two years the interests of the international were upheld by a commission sent in from the headquarters at Indianapolis. In 1921 the charter was restored and the organized activities of the district resumed their normal course.

The advent of the United Mine Workers into Nova Scotia is dealt with at some length in another chapter, and a detailed reference to it here would mean unnecessary duplication. Suffice it to say at this point that a local organization known as the Provincial Workmen's Association, which had long had jurisdiction over these coal fields, although conscious at the time of the need of affiliation with a larger body somewhere in order to make it more formidable for dealing with its powerful employer, as soon as it learned that affiliation with the American body would involve its own reduction to the status of a subordinate, determined to resist the newcomer with all the means at its disposal. Some of its lodges, however, were favorable to the larger union. The first of these to take action was that of Springhill, in 1908, which thus became the first branch of the United Mine Workers in Nova Scotia. In the following year a number of locals were formed on Cape Breton Island alongside the lodges of the Canadian body, and in 1909 District Union No. 26 was instituted, with jurisdiction covering the province. A struggle for supremacy followed which lasted for nearly a decade. The demands for recognition and the formation of working agreements by the United Mine Workers and charges of discrimination against their members were ignored by the coal operators. In 1909 boards of investigation appointed under the provisions of the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act both at Glace Bay and Springhill found against the claims of the union. During the strikes which followed the refusal of the union to abide by the board decisions, the members of the Provincial Workmen's Association remained at work in accordance with their standing agreement with the company and were thus instrumental in bringing about the defeat of the international in each instance after a protracted struggle in which the latter spent nearly a million dollars in strike benefits in a single year. Disheartened by their reception, the United Mine Workers, after a few years, apparently abandoned the province, leaving their

rival once more in sole possession of the area and of much bad blood. But in 1916 an organization calling itself the United Mine Workers of Nova Scotia was formed largely of the same elements who had earlier favored affiliation with the American body, and apparently succeeded in establishing working agreements with the operators at this time of rising wages and scarcity of labor. During the following winter, with prices rapidly rising and the necessity of an increase in wages to the miners apparent, the chief difference between the rival labor organizations was that the new body was more insistent on having the operators meet the wage demands that had been made and which both organizations felt were fair. The efforts of a royal commission supported by an appeal to the patriotism of the workers resulted in a union of the two bodies into a new organization called the Amalgamated Mine Workers of Nova Scotia. Indications are not lacking that, before the conferences that resulted in this amalgamation were over, the leaders of the older organization were fearful lest that other affiliation that they had battled so hard to prevent in 1908 would again be asked for. However that may be, the Amalgamated Mine Workers of Nova Scotia had only existed a few months when it cast its lot with the United Mine Workers of America, and District No. 26 became once more a reality.

During 1911 several local branches of the United Mine Workers of America were formed in the coal fields of Vancouver Island, and in December, District Union No. 28 was established, with jurisdiction over this territory. Strikes for recognition, linked generally with demands for increased wages and improved conditions of employment, characterized the early years of the union in this region also, over one million dollars in strike benefits being paid in eighteen months. The first strike began in September, 1912, at Extension and Cumberland, and on May 1, 1913, spread to all the mines of the island, involving 3,700 men and a tax upon the United Mine Workers organization of \$16,-

500 per week. In some mines it continued into 1914. As neither party showed a willingness to ask for a board under the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, and as there seemed little likelihood of settlement under the increasingly embittered relations, the Canadian Minister of Labor visited the district in July, but to little purpose. The militia occupied the strike area at an early stage, and violence and injuries, arrests and imprisonments came in due order. With respect to the last, the British Columbia Federation of Labor, in convention assembled, passed a resolution demanding impeachment of the judges who had conducted the trial of the miners. The Canada Trades Congress granted \$500 and gave the strikers its moral support. A royal commission reporting in October condemned the abusive and intimidating tactics used by the striking miners, but indorsed the principle of collective bargaining as desirable. It also recommended the legal enforcement of such agreements through amendment of the Canadian Industrial Disputes Act as well as the prevention of discrimination against men for belonging to a union and the institution of a penalty upon the employer dismissing men for such cause. Notwithstanding this rather favorable decision, during 1915 District No. 28 was dissolved and has not since been reorganized. For a time the local organizations were maintained, but more recently they also have been abandoned.

✓ A policy of the United Mine Workers is never to work except under trade agreements, so far as possible, and in Canada it has sought to make these agreements co-extensive with the districts. In the West this arrangement, once established, has been maintained, albeit with some difficulty, the several companies of District 18 coming to terms with the district officers from time to time and framing future agreements based on uniform standards. But in Nova Scotia, where there is only one employing company with its head office located in Montreal, and where as a consequence the district officers have to leave the coal areas

to treat with directors unknown to the miners and suspected by them of lacking both knowledge and interest in their condition, the bargaining is more difficult. Both in 1922 and in 1924 these "Montreal agreements" have been the cause of insubordination among the more radical elements in the province. In 1922 the discontent was so pronounced that at a special convention of the district a vote of censure was passed upon certain responsible officers of the executive, and as a result the whole executive board, including international board member Silby Barrett, stood for re-election, but Mr. Barrett was defeated at the hands of one Alexander Stewart in a three-cornered contest. The International Executive Board, at a meeting held in Indianapolis in October, ruled that the district was without authority to force the resignation of an international board member and elect his successor without conforming to the provisions of the international constitution governing such matters, and that Mr. Barrett was therefore the qualified executive board member from the district until the completion of his regular term of office. The district executive officers refusing to accept the ruling, the situation was most unsatisfactory for some time, one of the lodges, in December, passing a resolution calling upon all the others to follow it in refusing to pay any further per capita tax until all the troubles were settled.<sup>13</sup>

It has been a subject of much speculation how far the rebellion at this time in District 26 from international authority and its repudiation of the signed contract of its own officers was a result of radical propaganda carried on in the district by outside organizations. At the convention of the Trade Union Educational League at Chicago in August, 1922, a Canadian delegate reported how a representative had attended the convention of the miners in District 26, and that the miners had indorsed the League, its program, ideals, and tactics by forming groups in each of the mining towns. The atmosphere seems to have been

<sup>13</sup> *Twelfth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 233.

charged with the spirit of Moscow during the summer months, and the credentials of the district were carried to the meeting of the Red International by John McDonald, of Toronto, a promoter of the Workers' Party of Canada, which is itself the representative north of the line of the Trade Union Educational League. In December Mr. J. B. McLachlin, district secretary, at the request of a subdistrict, communicated with President Lewis asking for a statement of the attitude of the central organization toward the proposed affiliation of District 26 with the Red International. Mr. Lewis' reply was of course uncompromisingly opposed to any such action. He pointed out the insurmountable differences between his organization and that of Moscow, especially with reference to collective bargaining and the sanctity of agreements once entered into, and closed with recommending that District 26 withdraw its application for affiliation with the Russian organization, failing which the autonomy of the district would be suspended and the international would assume control of the government of affairs in the province. Subsequently the district executive board bowed to the decision of the central executive, but declared its intention of carrying an appeal against the same to the 1923 convention of the organization.<sup>14</sup>

Difficulties again arose when the agreement between the Steel Corporation and the district came to an end on January 15, 1924. With Mr. Barrett declaring that the union men would work only under agreement, the company, after a rather indefinite postponement of conferences, proclaimed a wage cut of 20 per cent in all of its mines. When, after a strike of upward of a month, an agreement was arrived at in Montreal, the Stellarton miners refused for some time to accept the terms. Subsequently, by referendum taken on the new wage scale, the vote as completed March 6 stood 5,617 against, and 3,145 for, ratification. The situation at present (May, 1924) therefore calls for the

<sup>14</sup> *Twelfth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 169-73.

provincial executive to submit the matter to President Lewis and the International executive board for readjustment, inasmuch as the central officers were active in arranging the agreement.<sup>15</sup>

The government report of 1911 credits the United Mine Workers of America with fifty locals and 12,950 members in Canada. A year later its branches had fallen to thirty-three and its membership was less than 6,000. During the war its following dropped even lower, and its rise to first place among the unions of Canada for a second time came only with the accession of the miners of Nova Scotia. In 1920 it numbered sixty-six branches and 19,802 members, and in 1923 the corresponding figures were seventy-two and 22,800.

The Amalgamated Clothing Workers opened two branches in Montreal soon after its organization, which resulted from a secession from the United Garment Workers taking place at the Nashville convention in 1914. For the space of a year it held in amalgamation, as a separate department, the Journeymen Tailors' Union, an arrangement which affected a number of branches with some 800 members in Canada. At the end of that time, however, largely through the efforts of the American Federation of Labor, by whom the Amalgamated, as a seceding body, could not be recognized, the tailors' union reverting to its original state.

<sup>15</sup> The strike that followed lasted for six months and involved 7,000 men. Settlement was finally effected by a joint conference of miners and operators called by the Dominion Minister of Labor and a three-year contract signed involving a cut of \$1.17 per day for contract work and 90 cents for day labor. A further case of insubordination in District 26 occurred in 1923 when the workers in Cape Breton, led by District President Dan Livingstone and District Secretary J. B. McLachlin, went out on strike in sympathy with the strikers in the plant of the British Empire Steel Corporation. The strike was maintained more or less effectually for some weeks in the face of instructions from President Lewis ordering the men back to work, and in spite of the deposition of these leaders by the international executive. See *Thirteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 187.

In Canada, as elsewhere, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers has experienced a phenomenal growth. By the end of 1916 it had jumped to third place among the international bodies in point of Canadian membership, the figure given being 7,000. Its growth since has been less spectacular, yet continuous. In 1922 it had fourteen branches in Canada, seven being in Montreal, six in Toronto, and one in Hamilton. Its membership at the close of the year was 9,750. Its numerical gains, however, are not a net increase to organized labor in the clothing industry. While it has been making this advance, the United Garment Workers, which prior to 1914 had been a prominent body in Canadian labor circles, has fallen from twenty-two branches with 3,000 members to eleven branches with a membership not exceeding 700 (1922).

A feature of the Amalgamated is found in the so-called "joint industrial councils" which it seeks to form with the employers in the chief cities where it operates. The parties to these joint councils are the union on the one hand and all the manufacturers of the particular city on the other. Thus the union has an agreement with the manufacturers of Toronto which dates from August 28, 1919, which lays down uniform piece rates for that area. It is a perpetual agreement subject to amendments, improvements, or additions desired by either party and obtaining the consent of both parties. Montreal has a similar agreement which is handled on behalf of the workers by the Montreal Joint Board, a body corresponding to the district councils of the carpenters and embracing the seven branches in the city with 5,000 members.

## 2. INTERNATIONAL RADICALISM

Along with its other contributions to the Canadian labor movement, the United States furnished certain radical elements. The American Labor Union was a western body, having its headquarters at Butte, Montana. It favored industrial unionism as a form of organization and declared boldly for independent

working-class political action. It adopted the platform of the Socialist party of America in its entirety as its own political platform. In the winter of 1902-3 it sent its organizers into British Columbia and brought serious dissension into the ranks of labor by its challenge to the principles and the forms of unionism then existing. In Victoria it was openly opposed by the international unionists, and although it received considerable support for a time from socialists within the movement, it never succeeded in accomplishing any very tangible results. In Vancouver it was more successful, and in March the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council instructed its organization committee to communicate with the headquarters of the American Labor Union "whenever it was proposed to form local unions not eligible to affiliate with international unions." This seems to have been the thin edge of the wedge, for in April, following dissensions in the Street Railwaymen's Union, the Council indorsed the principle of industrial unionism and "filed" the per capita tax notice of the Trades Congress.

During the spring and early summer labor conditions in the province became very unsettled. Bitter strikes were carried on by the employees of the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company, the miners of Vancouver Island, and the members of the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees on the Canadian Pacific Railway. These strikes, which were mainly for union recognition, were launched directly by the railway brotherhood and the Western Federation of Miners, but in the course of their operations they received support through sympathetic strikes in different callings in Vancouver and elsewhere. So unsatisfactory did conditions become that the Dominion government appointed a royal commission consisting of Chief Justice Hunter, of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, and Rev. Dr. Rowe, of Victoria, with Mr. W. L. MacKenzie King, Deputy Minister of Labor, as secretary, with instructions to investigate the labor situation generally in the province. This commission, after taking

evidence for upward of a month, reported that the American Labor Union, the Western Federation of Miners, and the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees had united "in confederation with each other, the latter two being affiliated with the former, and their leaders were engaged in a conspiracy to sweep all the employees of the Canadian Pacific Railway into the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees and all coal miners into the Western Federation of Miners, and no doubt with a view to being able to stop all transportation and all mining whenever it might appear expedient in advancement of the common end."<sup>16</sup>

Secretary Draper, in his report to the convention of the Trades and Labor Congress in September, 1903, drew the attention of the delegates to the loss of twelve affiliations in the province during the year, the defections being ascribed to the active "combating of our Congress and the American Federation of Labor, representing the bona fide international trade union movement, operating along trade autonomy lines," by the American Labor Union and its two affiliates, representing "international semi-political, industrial socialism as incorporated in the American Labor Union platform of principles." He notes also that "the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council (hertofore affiliated with Congress) is now actively opposed to Congress, . . ."<sup>17</sup>

In their report to the Congress, dated August 2, 1903, George Bartley and J. H. Watson, members of the provincial executive committee for British Columbia, declared it to be their opinion that the great bulk of the union men favored the old line unions, but that they had "temporarily stepped aside and allowed the political socialists to run their course."<sup>18</sup>

The failure of the strike against the Canadian Pacific Railway and the unqualified condemnation of the methods of these

<sup>16</sup> *Labor Gazette*, Vol. IV, 133-34.

<sup>17</sup> *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 50.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

revolutionary organizations by the royal commission seem to have brought the formal operations of two of them, the American Labor Union and the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees, to a hasty close so far as Canada was concerned. The story of their turbulent and pretentious stand in British Columbia is interesting as being the first of the radical movements finding a field of operations in the West and threatening the complacency of the main movement of Canadian unionism. While the two organizations formally withdrew, doubtless the impression left upon the labor philosophy of the province was not without its effect upon the progress of the Industrial Workers of the World and the One Big Union movements which were to come later.

The Industrial Workers of the World, with its project of industrial unionism and the formation of the "structure of a new society within the shell of the old," made its advent into Canada in 1906, when it formed several branches in the West and began to spread its message among the camps of the metal miners and the unskilled workers. By 1911 it claimed a following of 10,000 on Canadian soil, largely in British Columbia and Alberta. During 1912 it conducted the most serious industrial dispute of the year in the Dominion, among the construction workers employed by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company. At the end of the year its membership was given as 5,000 in a dozen branches. In 1913 the Canadian wing seems to have shared in the general decline which marked the organization as a whole, but it failed to take part in the return to numerical strength which characterized it south of the boundary during 1914. At the end of the year the government report credits it with only 465 members. During 1915 the three remaining branches, left to the organization in Canada, were dissolved on account of the war, although it is said isolated individuals and radical groups probably continued a connection with the parent organization. In an order-in-council dated September 24, 1918,

both the Industrial Workers of the World and the Workers' International Industrial Union—the latter sometimes called the Detroit branch of the Industrial Workers of the World—were, along with a list of foreign-speaking political groups, declared unlawful organizations, and a penalty of from one to five years imprisonment was prescribed for anyone continuing in membership. Possession of radical literature and holding of meetings by these groups were also threatened with penalties. So far, however, as the organizations with which we have to deal in this section were concerned, the order only affected positively a lone branch of the Workers' International Industrial Union. Soon after the ban was lifted, in 1919, the latter organization formed two branches in Canada, one in Toronto, and the other at Kitchener, Ontario, but neither of them was long lived. More recently the Industrial Workers of the World has established itself in Canada for a second time, the accession being due to the collapse of the Lumber Workers' Industrial Union as an independent body. The latter seems to have been angled for by both the One Big Union and the Industrial Workers of the World, and after failing to get a respectable representation at its own convention in December, 1922, it decided to throw in its lot with the American organization. Early in 1923 the Lumber Workers' Industrial Union No. 120 of the Industrial Workers of the World was formed at Cranbrook, British Columbia, and subsequently the Vancouver branch of the Lumber Workers was received as a branch of the same district union.

### 3. ORGANIZATIONS OTHER THAN INTERNATIONAL

In addition to the international unions which have one or more local branches in Canada there have risen from time to time various central craft organizations and bodies organized from among different branches of the Dominion and provincial civil service, which on account of their purely Canadian following and pretensions are to be classed as non-international. The

natural parent federation and charter-issuing body for these organizations would seem to be the Canadian Federation of Labor, and, with a considerable proportion of them in the past, this relation has been acknowledged; but with the continuing failure of the Canadian Federation to establish itself as an effective rival of the Canada Trades and Labor Congress the connection has been allowed to lapse in all cases save two. The congress, on its part, while it claims a larger number in affiliation at the present time, has been constitutionally handicapped in extending its patronage to some of them on account of their operations being carried on in competition with international or national bodies already in the field. Apart from the five bodies chartered by the congress, therefore, these organizations are to be added to the forces of the National Catholic, One Big Union, and Canadian Federation of Labor organizations and to the independent local bodies as constituting a labor element in the country having no connection with the international labor movement of the continent. Seven of them, in fact, in 1923 were operating in direct opposition to international unions which claimed jurisdiction over the classes of workers comprising their respective memberships; and considering them from year to year, a fair proportion have come into existence through the efforts of seceders from established international unions, putting forward among other reasons for seceding the plea that the return to the Canadian branches in the matter of trade protection and benefits was not commensurate with the money paid as per capita tax to the respective headquarters in the United States.

With a few notable exceptions, the non-international bodies have been characterized by a deplorable instability, each successive year showing the appearance and disappearance of names in the lists put out by the Department of Labor. Nevertheless, thanks in some measure to the increasing organization of government employees, the group has maintained its proportions in the total union movement of the country. In 1912 it

had nine organizations with 217 branches and 15,616 members; in 1920 the corresponding figures were fourteen organizations with 259 branches and 25,406 members; and in 1923 sixteen bodies with 278 branches and a membership of 34,315.<sup>19</sup> When it is recalled that these figures for 1912 represented all the non-international union forces in Canada at that time, save some twenty-eight independents numbering possibly 10,000 members, and that the National Catholic and One Big Union movements have arisen since, it will be evident that so far as numbers are concerned the internationals have lost somewhat in their proportion of the total. These comparisons may be made more easily by reference to Table VII, on page 130.

For many years the most important organizations of the class we are considering were the Provincial Workmen's Association among the Nova Scotia coal miners and the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees, but both of these bodies are now incorporated into the international movement. The latter, as we have already indicated, became an international body in 1919, after an active career as a national organization for more than a decade. The Provincial Workmen's Association, whose history is given at length in chapter iii, operated for nearly forty years as a purely Canadian body before it finally cast in its lot with the United Mine Workers of America in 1917.

Other important bodies which carried on an active existence for a period of years and which have now passed out of existence or ceased to operate as purely national concerns were the following:

1. The British Columbia Association of Stationary Engineers, organized in April, 1904. It passed out of existence in August, 1917, its membership almost unanimously voting to transfer their allegiance to the International Union of Steam

<sup>19</sup> This last figure includes local unions chartered directly by the congress and the Canadian Federation of Labor, the former accounting for 4,773 members, and the latter 14,774, in 1923. See *Thirteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 237.

and Operating Engineers, believing that prospects for getting better working conditions would be more favorable as a result of the change.<sup>20</sup>

2. The Federation of Textile Workers of Canada, founded in 1906 with headquarters at Montreal with powers to organize textile workers in all parts of the Dominion. It had at one time as many as five branches and 1,300 members. It also went over to the international faith, joining the United Textile Workers of America in April, 1919.<sup>21</sup>

3. The Fishermen's Union of Nova Scotia, incorporated under the laws of Nova Scotia in 1905, its main object being to enable its members more effectively to present their views to the government in matters affecting their welfare. At one time it had upward of twenty-five branches, but its chief activity appears to have been confined to its first years of life. No branches were organized after 1909. Its dissolution took place in 1913.

4. The Retail Employees' Organization of British Columbia, founded in March, 1913, in Victoria, British Columbia. Its declared objects were to secure a permanent weekly half-holiday for all employees in the retail distributive trades, a limitation of the hours of labor, and a general improvement in conditions. For some years it boasted nine branches and a following of 1,500. In 1917 its name ceased to appear in the government reports, its membership being reported largely absorbed in the Retail Clerks' International Protective Association.<sup>22</sup>

5. La Corporation Ouvrière Catholique in the District of Three Rivers, P.Q., and La Fédération Ouvrière Mutuelle du Nord, established in 1913 and operated, each with a number of branches and a considerable membership, until they were affiliated in the National Catholic Federation.<sup>23</sup>

6. The Commercial Telegraphers' Union of Canada, a more

<sup>20</sup> *Seventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 94.

<sup>21</sup> *Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 126.

<sup>22</sup> *Seventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 94.

<sup>23</sup> See chap. ix.

recent body resulting from a secession from the Commercial Telegraphers' Union of America. After a two years' struggle with its parent organization it passed out of existence in August, 1923, leaving the international in full possession of the field.<sup>24</sup>

The non-international organizations existing at the present time (January, 1924) may conveniently be classed into the following two groups: (1) those which derive their membership from the employees of the various government services, or which by nature of the conditions governing their trade are necessarily distinctly Canadian, and (2) organizations existing as a result of recent secessions from international bodies.

Under the last caption are to be included the Canadian Association of Railway Enginemen, the Canadian Electrical Trades Union, and the Canadian Federation of Bricklayers, Masons, and Plasterers.

The Canadian Association of Railway Enginemen was formed during the summer of 1921 in opposition to the old established Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. Two reasons are given for the rise of the new organization. The first of these, and, apparently the more immediate cause, was the dissatisfaction engendered in certain quarters by the contract known as the Chicago Joint Agreement, which set the maximum mileage per month, in order to benefit the irregular or spare men. During 1920 a number of the Canadian lodges of the brotherhood were suspended for violation of its terms, and at the 1921 convention of the latter, the charters of three lodges which persisted in their

<sup>24</sup> Another unsuccessful attempt at secession from an international body, carried on in more localized area, was that of the printers in the government printing offices at Ottawa, who, in 1907, renounced their allegiance to the International Typographical Union at a time when continued demands were being made upon them for funds to support strikes in the United States. The seceders maintained their organization for a number of years, sacrificing their benefit payments which they had made to the international. During part of their course they took an active part in the affairs of the Canadian Federation of Labor, and appear to have laid the basis of a printing trades council within that movement. Their organization was reported dissolved in 1919.

violations were revoked. The second reason advanced for the formation of a purely Canadian body was the small return received by the members in proportion to the money sent as dues and assessments to the headquarters of the brotherhood in the United States. In 1923 the new organization was reported as having twenty branches and a following of 405 members.<sup>25</sup>

The Canadian Electrical Trades Union developed from a branch of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers located in Toronto, which seceded in 1920. Here again, as with the enginemen, one of the reasons given for secession was that the per capita tax was excessive in comparison with the benefits received. In addition it was alleged that the International Brotherhood had been lax in its efforts to organize the trade in the Dominion, and that a closer form of organization in the electrical industry was necessary. To this end the new body has emphasized as the avowed objects of its existence, in addition to thorough organization strengthened by a system of apprenticeship, the encouragement of schools of instruction for teaching the practical application of electricity, the cultivation of friendship and mutual helpfulness among members of the craft, and by legal and proper means to elevate their moral, intellectual, and social conditions, and finally to regulate the relations between employers and employed and "to settle all disputes and grievances by arbitration or otherwise." Besides the two branches at Toronto and Regina which seceded from the international, the Canadian Electrical Trades Union has formed three others. Its membership in 1923 was stated to be 1,750.<sup>26</sup>

The Canadian Federation of Bricklayers, Masons, and Plasterers is a small organization of six branches and some 900 members operating in the province of Quebec and dating back to 1918. Like the organization of electrical workers, it established itself with a seceding branch of an international serving as a

<sup>25</sup> *Thirteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 23, 237.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44, 237.

nucleus, this time the deserted parent being the bricklayers' union. The promoters of the federation state that their object is to "shake off the American yoke and resume their autonomy for an absolutely national object." Membership is open to all nationalities and creeds, the organization having nothing in common with the National Catholic Union. The federation, along with the Electrical Trades Union, is affiliated with the Canadian Federation of Labor.<sup>27</sup>

The National Association of Marine Engineers of Canada is composed of marine engineers holding certificates granted by either the Dominion government or the British Board of Trade. It was established in 1893 to promote the interests of this class in the Dominion, and now numbers close upon a thousand members. It is distinctly a Canadian organization by reason of the conditions governing the certificates of marine engineers. It took a charter from the Trades Congress in 1922.

The Brotherhood of Dominion Express Employees, with twenty-five branches and 1,642 members (1923), consists exclusively of male workers employed by the company indicated. It was founded at Toronto in 1918, being registered under the terms of the Trade Union Act.

The Canadian Association of Stationary Engineers is an incorporated body, its charter having been issued in 1887. While it is a craft organization, its objects are mainly educational and legislative.

Six of the organizations classed as non-international are composed of employees in the service of the Dominion government, three of them, representing at present slightly over half the membership, being affiliated with the Trades and Labor Congress and thus indirectly identified with the international labor movement. Only one of the group dates its beginnings back more than a decade, and four of them are the expression of

<sup>27</sup> *Tenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 129.

a sentiment growing up at the close of the World War. Altogether they have a following of upwards of 10,000 members, thus exceeding the total membership of all the non-international central craft organizations by not less than 4,000.

"The Federated Association of Letter Carriers, which was formed in September, 1891, is an organization of public servants of the class indicated formed for the purpose of protecting their interests in regard to salaries and working conditions, etc." Until the summer of 1918 the Association had its branches in all the cities and towns in the Dominion where there was a mail delivery service. At that time, however, as a result of dissatisfaction with the terms accepted in settlement of a strike which it had been operating, its jurisdiction in the West was challenged by a new body (hereafter to be considered). In 1923 it numbered forty-three branches with a membership of 1,919. For years it has been registered under the Friendly Societies' Act of Ontario for the transaction of life insurance in the province.<sup>28</sup>

The Dominion Postal Clerks' Association came into existence in 1913 at a convention of representatives of a number of scattered lodges of postal workers. Notwithstanding a secession of a number of clerks in the western offices following an unauthorized strike in the postal service west of the Great Lakes in 1918, the association has continued to make progress. From a following of 2,000 in 1920 it has risen to 3,200 (1923), included in thirty-seven branches, and is thus the largest labor organization among the government employees. Its avowed aim is to secure by co-operation with the Post-Office Department the classification of post-office clerks with the view of getting more equitable salary rates, regulation of hours of labor, the improvement of the public service, and such other objects as may arise. In 1920 it interested itself in the establishment of a joint council,

<sup>28</sup> *Thirteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 45, 237.

modeled on the Whitley type, for the adjustment of grievances in the postal service. Like the Federated Association of Letter Carriers, it is affiliated by charter with the Canada Trades Congress.<sup>29</sup>

The Dominion Railway Mail Clerks' Federation is a body composed of postal service employees of the branch indicated, numbering in 1923, 1,145, and included in fourteen branches. Among its declared objects are the advancement of the service and the interests of its members. Division associations are in existence at all points where the Post-Office Department has a superintendent of railway mail service. It dates back to 1918.

The Amalgamated Civil Servants of Canada, first established as the Federation of Western Postal Employees, then operating for several years under the title of the Amalgamated Postal Workers, is an organization which developed upon the basis of elements seceding from the Dominion Postal Clerks' Association and the Federated Association of Letter Carriers in September, 1918. With its jurisdiction west of the Great Lakes, and rising thus as a protest body against eastern control, it appears to have been in line with the general sectional feeling in the ranks of labor at that eventful time. It threw its membership open to all post-office employees under the rating of first-class clerks, the intention of its promoters being to amalgamate the associations of postal clerks, railway mail clerks, and letter carriers in the western territory. At the annual convention held in August, 1921, the name was changed to the Amalgamated Civil Servants of Canada, membership being extended to all employees of the Dominion government. The organization at present numbers eleven branches with upward of a thousand members. It has been denied affiliation with the Canada Trades Congress on account of its jurisdiction conflicting with two established national bodies already chartered by the latter.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

Of the sixteen non-international organizations that were in existence in 1923, only five reported the disbursement of benefits. The total sum expended for the year amounted to \$42,235. Of this amount the Dominion Railway Mail Clerks' Federation distributed \$30,150; the Federated Association of Letter Carriers, \$9,000; and the Canadian Electrical Trades Union, \$1,584; all of which went for death benefits. The last-named body also expended \$1,251 for sick benefits.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 261.

## CHAPTER V

### TRADE-UNION DEVELOPMENT SINCE 1902—*Continued*

#### OTHER PHASES OF SECONDARY ORGANIZATION

##### I. INTERMEDIATE DELEGATED BODIES

Standing in an intermediate relation between the international organizations and the branch locals, there exist in Canada, as in the United States, a number of delegate bodies known as "district councils," or, in some cases, "conference boards." These bodies generally represent geographical divisions, sometimes confined to a single locality, in other cases covering a province or even a larger area and including all the locals in the trade within that area. Thus, District Lodge No. 2 of the International Association of Machinists has jurisdiction over all units containing members of the organization employed on Canadian railways; the Ontario Provincial Council of the same union operates for certain purposes, as the name suggests, with respect to one province; while the Montreal and Toronto district councils of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers confine their efforts respectively to the two cities indicated. District 18 of the United Mine Workers affords yet another variation, inasmuch as its jurisdiction covers the coal area of Alberta and eastern British Columbia, while one of the three conference boards of the International Typographical Union affecting Canadian branches, disregards national boundaries and has for its responsibility the states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, along with the province of British Columbia. Nor does this list exhaust the variety of types. Still another variant is represented by District Council No. 30 of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers and Iron Shipbuilders, whose jurisdiction covers

all Canadian lodges of the craft whose members are employed on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The functions of these bodies vary considerably among themselves, but in general their purpose is to deal with trade and such other matters in their own areas as are susceptible to more effectual treatment through conferences of representatives of the constituent locals than through the operations of the locals acting in isolation. To meet their expenses a per capita tax is levied on the branches in affiliation. Where the councils are purely local, meetings are held at frequent intervals; but in the case of provincial and Dominion-wide bodies, the meetings are held annually or semiannually.

For the most part district councils in Canada are a development of the present century. In 1923 there were 49, divided by trades as follows: carpenters, 15; machinists, 6; clothing workers of various kinds, 6; printers, 3; longshoremen, 3; boot and shoe workers, mine workers, theater employees, and steam shovel and dredgmen, 2 each; bricklayers, boilermaker, plumbers, sheet-metal workers, molders, musicians, and barbers, 1 each.<sup>1</sup>

Organization among railway employees in Canada has structural features peculiar to the industry which follow the same general lines as in the United States. In fact, with one exception the Canadian branches of the brotherhoods and other railway bodies are but extensions of the American organization, a minimum of attention having been paid to political boundary lines in an industry which by its nature has been interested in setting them at naught. Consequently we find the local lodges located at the various divisional points of the different railway lines, and each for the most part confining its membership to the employees on a particular line or system. The structures of the several organizations provide for the establishment of delegate bodies known in some cases as "grievance committees," in oth-

<sup>1</sup> *Thirteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 66 ff.

ers as "protective boards" or "committees of adjustment," whose function is largely to deal with grievances and disputes. One or more of such committees or boards is elected by each local, according to whether the latter includes in its membership employees of one or more railway systems. In addition to the local committees there exist "joint protective" or "general grievance" boards for each railway system, the chairman of the local boards constituting the membership. In the event of grievances arising over working conditions, etc., the local committees have power to carry complaints to the highest divisional official of the railway company concerned. If they fail to effect a satisfactory settlement, the matter in dispute is handed over to the general committees to take up with the companies' officers. When these efforts also are ineffective, appeal may be made to the grand president. If the dispute still remains unadjusted, the general committee, acting with the grand president, has power to sanction a strike provided two-thirds of the membership serving on the system affected have by vote approved of this course.

The powers of these general committees are not limited to dealing with grievances. They embrace also the making of by-laws for their own government, the levying of assessments to meet their expenses, and the making of working agreements with railway companies as to rates of wages, rules, etc.<sup>2</sup> Statistics for general committees of the nine railway bodies which have carried this form of organization into Canada for the two years 1912 and 1922 are shown in Table VIII. It will be seen from the list that while the strongest and most influential bodies have adopted this form of organization, lesser organizations, such as the Switchmen's Union and the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, which have formed lodges in Canada, have not seen fit to do so. The committees vary greatly in size and importance according to the size of the railway system whose employees they represent. Four of the railroad brotherhoods also maintain

<sup>2</sup> *Third Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 47-48.

bodies known as legislative boards, which are designed to protect the interest of railway men at the various seats of government by securing the passage of favorable laws and the defeat of those deemed otherwise. These are the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, the Order of Railway Conductors, and the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen. Of these, only the first-named has had provincial legislative boards for any length of time, the Order of Conductors electing their first in 1916, and the other

TABLE VIII

Name of Organization	1912	1922
Order of Railway Conductors.....	15	18
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.....	9	26
Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen (joint protective boards).....	18	24
Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen.....	21	24
Brotherhood of Maintenance-of-Way Employees.....	13	9
Brotherhood of Railroad Carmen (joint protective boards)....	4	4
Order of Railroad Telegraphers.....	0	11
Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees.....	0	4
Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, and Station Employees (boards of adjustment).....	0	2
Total.....	80	122

two still later. All four had Dominion boards as far back as 1912, but in two cases they were allowed to lapse during the earlier years of the war. These brotherhoods, it will be well to remember in this connection, are not affiliated with the Trades and Labor Congress.

Under the general heading of this section are to be found other groupings of very different form and function. The list includes (1) trades and labor councils, (2) provincial federations of labor, (3) building and printing trades councils, and other federations of branches in closely allied trades.

Of these various types the first to appear were the trades and labor councils, that of Toronto, as we have already noted, being

able to boast a continuous existence back to 1881, while those of several other cities of Ontario had a beginning almost as early. In Canada, as elsewhere, trades councils are voluntary bodies, there being no compulsion for local unions to affiliate. In practice it is very seldom that all the locals in a given locality become members, the local lodges of the railway brotherhoods being particularly disinterested. The function of the councils is primarily to give expression to the opinion of the organized workers on public questions. On occasions, however, they take part in supporting the demands of affiliated members for better working conditions. Only a few of the larger councils, notably those of Winnipeg, Toronto, Quebec, and Vancouver, have been prominent in the work of direct legislative lobbying.

In 1910, with the initiative coming from the Vancouver Trades Council, the Trades and Labor Congress recommended the establishment of provincial federations of labor corresponding in function to the state federations in the United States, and made provision for them in its constitution, it being left, however to the labor group in each province to decide whether it would operate under a federation in affiliation with the congress, or remain more directly in dependence upon the latter under the old provincial committee system.<sup>3</sup> British Columbia took out a charter the same year and began an active campaign of organizing. By 1913 it had 120 affiliated unions with a membership of 14,000. It was aggressive in legislative lobbying; its conventions were well advertised; and it exchanged fraternal delegates with the Washington Federation of Labor.<sup>4</sup> In 1918 it numbered 18,000 members, comprised in 110 separate locals, which was something less than half the unions in the province.

Alberta followed the example of its western neighbor in 1912, and New Brunswick somewhat later. Ontario took a vote

<sup>3</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-sixth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XIV, 951.

on the proposition but decided to continue the older arrangement. At the close of the war Nova Scotia formed a provincial federation, but for some reason never operated it, and soon fell back on the committee system. In 1919 the British Columbia Federation went over to the One Big Union, and since that date the congress has operated in the province through the machinery of the older system.

The two provincial federations which exist today, therefore, are those of Alberta and New Brunswick. Some notion of their development and importance is to be had from the statistics of

TABLE IX

YEAR	ALBERTA		NEW BRUNSWICK	
	Number of Locals	Membership	Number of Locals	Membership
1913.....	.....	4,623	.....	1,846
1918.....	106	11,000	25	3,500
1923.....	170	16,000	31	4,165

yearly membership given in Table IX. Further light is thrown on the degree of inclusiveness of these organizations in their respective jurisdictions by the figures of total locals in the two provinces. In 1923 there were in Alberta 208 such bodies, and in New Brunswick, 114. In addition to the local branches of the international and national organizations and the federal labor unions, the provincial federations include, of course, trades and labor councils. The Alberta Federation has also worked in close association with the United Farmers of Alberta and, in fact, has included at times an agricultural wing.<sup>5</sup>

The third group which we have found it necessary to describe are for the most part of comparatively recent development in Canada. Their purpose is to harmonize the activities of

<sup>5</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 29.

the various local branch unions of closely allied crafts and to enable them to deal collectively in matters of trade, including the setting of wage schedules, union label, and other questions. Like the district councils within the craft organizations, they are generally confined to a particular locality or area, but some of them include the shop workers of a particular railway system. Like the councils, again, they are supported by a per capita tax from the affiliated unions.

In some cases these federations in Canada have paralleled in the number of crafts included, and have collaborated with the departments created within the American Federation of Labor. Thus, in the railway employees' group, Division No. 4, Railway Employees' Department, with jurisdiction over the organized shop workers on all Canadian railway lines, is working under charter from the Railway employees' Department of the American Federation. For a time a Dominion-wide organization existed in the metal trades, consisting of no less than nine metal-trades councils. This powerful aggregation has, however, since 1920 suffered disintegration, and today one metal-trades council remains, viz., that of Toronto. Other important delegate bodies of this type are found in the printing trades (a few of these dating back to the nineties of last century), theatrical employees, and employees of the public authorities. Under the last head are included Dominion letter carriers and postal workers and provincial and municipal employees of various types. At the close of 1923 there were in Canada fifty-one trade-union federations of this third general class, divided by groups as follows: building and printing trades councils, 10 each; railway employees' federations, 19; federations of theatrical employees, 4; federations of employees of public authorities, 6; metal-trades councils, 1; and labor educational associations, 1.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> For additional detail, see *Thirteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 62-65.

## II. NATION-WIDE OR SOVEREIGN DELEGATE BODIES

Under this heading are to be included the Canada Trades and Labor Congress, the Canadian Federation of Labor, the One Big Union, and the Federation of Catholic Workers of Canada. Of these, the last three are reserved for treatment in subsequent chapters, their organization being considered in each case in connection with their general history.

## CANADA TRADES AND LABOR CONGRESS

We return now to the later development of the Trades and Labor Congress. It will be recalled that in the last chapter we traced the story of its activities down to the convention of 1902 when the differences between the Knights of Labor and the trade unionists were recognized as vital and the former were banished from the congress. An attempt was made at the next convention to heal the breach by re-amending the constitution to include again the Knights of Labor assemblies among the organizations eligible for representation in the congress. The motion came from delegates of the Toronto Labor Council. The debate lasted for two hours, but the resolution was lost by a decisive majority.<sup>7</sup> The judgment of 1902 was thus upheld, and the matter never came up again. Congress was to be a delegate body of trade unionists.

The membership of the Canada Trades Congress has grown rapidly in the twentieth century. In 1901 the official figures were 8,381. Five years later they stood at 27,667. In 1911 they were 57,259, while another decade brought them up to 173,778. Beginning with 1913, the membership and total receipts are shown by successive years in Table X. Comparing membership figures with those of corresponding years for the total trade-union movement of the country (see p. 130), we find

<sup>7</sup> *Proceedings of Nineteenth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 42.

that the congress, during the past decade, has generally represented about one-half of the trade unionists of Canada.

## ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES

Organizing activities by the congress, while involving collaboration with affiliated international and national unions in the extension of their membership, have been chiefly concerned with the building up, chartering, and maintaining of trades and labor councils and federal unions. With regard to the former it was ruled in 1902 that they could affiliate with the congress by

TABLE X\*

Year	Membership	Receipts
1913.....	80,801	19,871.49
1914.....	80,094	23,713.14
1915.....	71,419	13,557.12
1916.....	66,573	13,646.64
1917.....	81,687	17,542.56
1918.....	117,498	25,803.80
1919.....	160,605	41,786.86
1920.....	173,463	46,827.32
1921.....	173,778	49,446.88
1922.....	132,071	25,157.02
1923.....	122,844	26,471.97
1924.....	117,110	27,190.01

\* The membership for 1925 dropped to 105,912.

charter only. As a result twenty-two trades and labor councils out of the forty-four in the whole country held charters at the end of a year. In 1913 the corresponding figures were 43 out of a total of 47, while in 1923 the proportion stood 47 out of 55. As for the federal unions, 30 such organizations held charters from the congress in 1903. By 1910 the number had dropped to 12, but twelve years later it had again risen to 53.

Organization has not been without its difficulties. In the years immediately following 1902 the congress was called upon to meet serious competition, especially in the province of Quebec, from its offshoot, the National Trades and Labor Congress. By 1906, as is explained in detail in chapter viii, this body was able

to claim a membership of 20,000, largely at the expense of the international organizations. At this time in the cigar unions we find the new label of the nationals contesting the field with the blue label of the international; and a similar condition obtained in the boot and shoe business. In the mining industry in Nova Scotia the national federation supported the Provincial Workmen's Association against the United Mine Workers, whereas the older congress condemned the local organization and upheld the international. While the national congress pictured its rival as unpatriotic and foreign, the Canada Trades and Labor Congress returned the compliment by designating the national as "a subcommittee of the manufacturers," remarking that "its requests give evidence of inspiration from the Canadian Manufacturers Association."<sup>8</sup>

A second difficulty confronting the Canada Trades Congress during the first years of the century was its lack of paid organizers, back of which of course stood the lack of the necessary funds. Until 1905 reliance for organizing activities rested upon the executive council and the provincial vice-presidents, the latter being authorized and made responsible for carrying on this work in their respective provinces. In 1905, however, we find the congress co-operating with the United Brotherhood of Leather workers, each party paying half the salary of an organizer operating in Ontario.<sup>9</sup> In the same year the Quebec provincial executive set forth the great need of an organizer capable of speaking the two languages to work in the French province. It called attention to the efforts of the rival body and to the fact that the Federated Trades Council of Quebec City, formed the year previous by the congress with fourteen locals affiliated, was making no progress. The same cry was repeated from year to

<sup>8</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-first Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

year. In 1907 organizer W. R. Trotter, was sent into the prairie provinces and found the movement there operating largely in isolation. The Edmonton Trades Council, with thirteen affiliated locals, was operating without any charter. The Calgary Trades Council knew almost nothing of the congress and its work. Such centers as Brandon and Regina were without central bodies to co-ordinate their labor effort. On the other hand the cities on the Pacific coast were well organized, and, taken as a whole, the West was far ahead of the Maritime Provinces.<sup>10</sup> In 1908 Mr. Trotter was again engaged in carrying on organizing work in the West, where we find him angling for District No. 18 of the United Mine Workers in addition to bringing in further trades councils and federal unions.

But while the West was thus being brought into a progressive condition, the East was falling back. In 1907 the union movement was reported almost dead in New Brunswick, the St. John council having dropped in three years from twenty-two locals in affiliation to the small showing of six. To remedy this condition the congress ordered Mr. Trotter into the Maritime Provinces in the fall of 1908, where we find him forming councils at Sydney and Moncton, and bringing new life to those of Halifax and St. John. The year 1909-10 was declared to be the best year from the standpoint of organized labor that Nova Scotia had ever experienced. Nevertheless, in 1912, organizer J. C. Watters, who at that time worked the field for some months, reported that the hours of toil were longer and the wages less in the Maritime Provinces than elsewhere in the Dominion, and he pictured deplorable conditions among the miners and steel workers of Nova Scotia, setting forth the intimidating tactics of the two great companies which prevented the success of efforts at organization.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-second Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 67-73.

<sup>11</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 55.

Meanwhile organization had been carried forward in the western provinces to such a degree that the new population influx was absorbed fairly well into the active organizations. The organizer reported in 1913 that out of 524 local unions in western Canada entitled to affiliation with the congress, all except fifty-eight were affiliated. During the war special efforts were turned upon the province of New Brunswick to bring it into line with other provinces more progressive from the standpoint of labor organization, and after the Winnipeg strike the congress had a regular representative again in the West in the person of R. A. Rigg. While these efforts have been directed toward the extremes of Canada, Quebec and Ontario have for the most part been attended to by the executive officers of the congress. The National Trades and Labor Congress, now called the Canadian Federation of Labor, ceased to be a dangerous rival after 1910. Other and more vigorous contestants appeared, however, at the close of the war, viz., the One Big Union in the West and the National Catholic Union in Quebec. Both movements have necessitated additional organizing efforts on the part of the congress, as well as (in the case of the One Big Union) the use of expensive court proceedings.<sup>12</sup> In recent years the higher salaries paid to the chief executive officers of the congress, enabling them to give much or all of their time to official work, has rendered them more effective as organizers. An advantage enjoyed by the congress that has been denied its various rivals in this matter of organization is the effective co-operation in its organizing efforts with the large internationals and the American Federation of Labor. Especially was this union of forces evident during the summer of 1919, when R. A. Rigg, of the congress, and Messrs. Varley and Farmilio, representing the federation, divided the western territory among them, and, co-operating with representatives of some of the internationals, worked to defeat the forces of the One Big Union.

<sup>12</sup> See chap. xi.

As may be inferred from the decline in the number of "federal" unions affiliated with the congress from 1903 to 1910, the situation with respect to the chartering of these bodies was for many years very unsatisfactory. In addition to the lack of regular organizers and the uncertainty regarding its own functions just referred to, the congress suffered from competition with the American Federation of Labor, which also issued charters to these bodies, and which, through its ability to offer material aid in case of strikes and lockouts, possessed a distinct advantage over the Canadian organization. In 1905 the British Columbia Provincial Committee requested that a working arrangement be adopted whereby there might be an interchange of cards between federal unions chartered by the congress and federal unions chartered by the American Federation, but no action is recorded.<sup>13</sup> Difficulties, moreover, seem to have been prevalent at this time on account of the revocation of charters by the executive of the congress, whether on account of international unions assuming jurisdiction in the field or for misdemeanors on the part of the locals. A remedy for this was afforded by the 1906 convention, which made revocation, except for acts in contravention of the constitution, a matter for the congress in regular annual session. The same session provided for the distribution at cost of the necessary supplies such as transfer cards, withdrawal cards, etc., needed in the conduct of union business as detailed in the by-laws governing these unions, and that a password be given quarterly from the secretary of the congress to each federal union.<sup>14</sup>

It is to be noted that this provision was canceled after the secession of many organizations in the West to the One Big Union. By resolutions of 1919 and 1920 the executive council

<sup>13</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-first Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 20, 49.

<sup>14</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-second Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 73.

was given power "by a majority vote of its members to revoke or suspend charters of any provincial federation of labor, trades and labor council, or federal union chartered by the congress who have wilfully violated the constitution or where the officers have encouraged or advocated secession from international unions or assisted in forming independent or dual organizations, and the books, papers, funds, and properties shall be surrendered by the organization against which action is taken to the executive council, to be held in trust pending the restoration of the charter suspended or revoked, when it shall be restored to the original or new organization."<sup>15</sup> At the end of 1922 there were fifty-three of these bodies chartered by the congress.

At the convention of 1910, as we have already recorded, the congress made constitutional provision for the establishment of provincial federations of labor, and subsequently it has chartered three such bodies.

A fourth class of organizations chartered by the congress has been a group of non-international unions whose jurisdiction is confined to Canada. A majority of this type of organizations stand independently; a few are affiliated with the Canadian Federation of Labor; while the remainder, in 1923 numbering only five, hold charters from the congress.<sup>16</sup> These are the Associated Federal Employees of Canada, the Canadian Great Lakes Fishermen's Protective Association, the Dominion Postal Clerk's Association, the Federated Association of Letter Carriers, and the National Association of Marine Engineers of Canada.<sup>17</sup>

*Defining the status and function of the congress.*—On pages 178–86 we discuss at some length the difficulties of arriving at a satisfactory definition of the powers and responsibilities of the congress in regard to the labor movement of the continent, and

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *Labor Gazette*, XIX, 1200; XX, 1340.

<sup>16</sup> At the close of 1925 this number was reduced to three, these being the last three here listed.

<sup>17</sup> See chap. iii.

especially its relation to the American Federation. This lack of clearness as to its functions was doubtless partially responsible for the failure of many organizations to give it their support. This seems to have been particularly true of the West. As late as 1906 organizer Trotter reported to the convention that the unions of such centers as Edmonton and Calgary, while working together effectively in their local trades councils, were almost entirely ignorant of the operations and the purposes of the congress, and in 1911 a similar condition of ignorance was reported from Manitoba and Saskatchewan.<sup>18</sup> In 1910 organizer J. C. Watters remarked upon the misapprehension regarding the status of the congress among the unions of British Columbia, "a fact," he notes in his report to the convention, "which lays emphasis on the necessity of a systematic campaign of education and organization being put into operation by the congress."<sup>19</sup> Before proceeding to inform the reader of the remedy devised to dispel these doubts and uncertainties from the minds of the Canadian workers, it will be necessary to relate some of the outstanding points in the controversy between the congress and the American Federation of Labor relative to their mutual relations, and their respective functions in the labor movement of the continent, in the decade following 1902.

Arising out of the Charlottetown incident referred to on page 75 and the failure of its American chartered trades and labor council to recognize a federal union chartered by the Canada Trades Congress there had issued a lengthy correspondence which finally brought about more direct negotiations between the American Federation of Labor and the congress with regard to the status of the latter in the whole labor movement of the continent. Briefly, it was the contention of Secretary Morrison,

<sup>18</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-seventh Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 47.

<sup>19</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-sixth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 37.

of the American Federation of Labor, that his organization should place the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada in the same category as it did the state federations of labor. This would mean that the congress would give up its right to issue charters itself, but would receive the various Canadian bodies into affiliation, chartered either by the internationals or directly by the American Federation, inasmuch as a clause of the constitution of the latter expressly states "that certificates of affiliation shall not be granted by state federations of labor; that power 'being' vested solely in the executive council of the American Federation of Labor and the executive officers of national and international unions affiliated therewith." Inasmuch as the constitution of the American Federation of Labor provided that its local unions must affiliate where possible with chartered central bodies which were required to be represented in the state federations or the Trades Congress of Canada, and since the American Federation of Labor insisted that all of its independent local unions should send delegates to the Canadian congress, the only possible objection to the affiliation with the American body, he contended, would be the extra expense, amounting to 10 cents per member per month. To be set over against this was the powerful financial assistance such bodies would receive in case of strike or lockout. In a word, the American Federation of Labor was to be accepted as the supreme organizing body, with jurisdiction over America. It was also to be the controller of the federated strike fund, and thus function as the great coordinating force for industrial action. The congress, on the other hand, relieved of these responsibilities, for which it was largely unfitted through lack of funds, was to have for its special concern the influencing of legislation in the Canadian field, and for this purpose the American Federation was to be expected to contribute to its support through an annual grant. The difference in fact between the Canadian congress and any one of the state federations of labor would lie in the arrangement that

the latter are themselves chartered by the American Federation of Labor and such charters carry with them the right of representation with one vote, whereas the congress is recognized by the federation, and the recognition carries with it representation by a fraternal delegate who also has the right to cast a single vote.<sup>20</sup> In opposition Secretary Draper set forth his views on the relationship essentially as follows: The Trades and Labor Congress "is a sovereign body within its constitution and within the confines of Canada, as is the British Trades Union Congress in Great Britain, and as is the American Federation of Labor in the United States." It never intended voluntarily to abrogate that first position to become a mere adjunct of another organization. Its statement of aims does not confine it to legislative endeavor, but expressly names organizing activities as one of its functions, together with the right "to formulate and discuss all subjects pertinent to labor, and to further by every honorable means the welfare of the working classes." The sovereignty of the congress had, moreover, been officially recognized already for some years by the American Federation of Labor through the system of sending and receiving duly accredited fraternal delegates at the respective conventions. While Article 1, section 3, of the constitution of the congress limits its field for organization work by excluding itself from territory already occupied by international and national unions, it was found in fact that the congress received very little assistance from the great majority of the *branches of international* trade unions. Above all, it was imperative for the congress, if it was going to "retain its standing as the legislative mouthpiece of organized labor in Canada, to emphatically protest against any movement having for its object the chartering and control of trades and labor councils," which would ultimately mean "the direction and control of the Canadian legislative movement."

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Correspondence, *Proceedings of Nineteenth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress.*

Speaking directly to the subject of the American Federation chartering the trades and labor council at Charlottetown, he argued that "Trades Councils are purely local legislative bodies in their particular localities or cities," and "as such, every trades council in the Dominion should have a charter from the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, as the Dominion legislative body." The agreement which was arrived at by the two organizations at this time and which served as a working basis for a number of years was set forth in the following terms:

1. That the American Federation of Labor will make it a qualification of issuing of charters to trades and labor councils in Canada that they will affiliate with the Trades and Labor Congress, and central bodies throughout the Dominion now holding American Federation of Labor charters will be instructed to take similar action.

2. That trade affairs in the central trades and labor councils in question shall be transacted along the lines of international trade unionism.

3. That all local bodies in the Dominion of Canada affiliated through international unions, or holding charter direct from the American Federation of Labor, be notified to become affiliated with the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada for the purpose of making it a more potent factor to secure the adoption of favorable legislation for the members of the Federal and Provincial Parliaments.<sup>21</sup>

This arrangement, it seems, was not popular among the Canadian unionists from the beginning, and, with the continuance of its operation, their opinion of it did not improve. In 1906 we find Secretary Draper complaining that the terms of clause 1 were not being carried out. Taking the agreement as a whole, it was believed among other things, that the congress lost financially under its provisions, and that the \$500 annual grant from the American Federation was no compensation for what it suffered in actual operation. As evidence of this, at the 1907 convention we find it adopting a motion "that the Executive Committee of the Congress be instructed to approach the Executive of the American Federation of Labor to urge an arrangement whereby

<sup>21</sup> *Labor Gazette*, IV, 323.

the monies devoted by that body for organization and legislative purposes in Canada be paid over to the Congress and expended under its supervision."<sup>22</sup> Nothing definite, however, resulted from this resolution.

But in 1910 we find the executive committee of the congress harking back to the claims put forward years earlier. In its annual report to the convention it again made its declaration for the supremacy of the congress as the mouthpiece of organized labor in Canada and expressed the opinion that where trades and labor councils were chartered by the congress they "should not be required or requested to take out charters with the American Federation of Labor." Subsequently recommendation was made that the incoming executive be authorized to have such efforts discontinued.<sup>23</sup> The same year the congress made constitutional provision to undertake as one of its responsibilities the formation and chartering of trades and labor councils. Finally, at the St. Louis convention of the American Federation of Labor, Secretary Draper and other delegates from Canada met with the special committee appointed by President Gompers, and between them the following recommendations among others were accepted by the convention and later heartily indorsed by the congress:

That the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada shall have the sole right to issue charters (certificates of affiliation) to Provincial or Local Central Labor Bodies in Canada.

That Canadian, Provincial or Central Labor Bodies holding charters from the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada may, at their discretion, also hold charters from the American Federation of Labor.<sup>24</sup>

Under the terms of this agreement the number of trades and labor councils affiliated by charter with the congress numbered forty-seven in 1923, while twenty-two were chartered by the

<sup>22</sup> *Labor Gazette*, VIII, 426.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, XI, 429.

<sup>24</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-seventh Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 14, 42, 92.

American Federation of Labor.<sup>25</sup> While this arrangement defines the authority of the congress with respect to charter-issuing and to activities in the legislative field, it also has been interpreted as freeing it from trade and jurisdictional disputes in so far as these concern international bodies. At the same convention certain complaints of jurisdictional difficulties brought forward by the Alberta Provincial Executive and represented as imposed upon the local councils at Calgary, Lethbridge, and Edmonton by contesting interests in the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor were referred for settlement to the latter body, and the Guelph convention of the following year refused to allow discussion on jurisdictional matters.<sup>26</sup>

As regards the international unions themselves, with whom the congress in 1902 had elected to rest its future, the relations, except in a few cases, were for many years scarcely more satisfactory. In 1908 we find Secretary Draper deploring the fact that their officers failed to understand the true position of the congress: that they still thought of it as rating with the state federations, and consequently no more entitled than they to support from headquarters. Five or six years earlier Mr. Draper had begun to press for the affiliation of the Canadian membership of each international and the remittance of the per capita tax on the same through the latter's head office. Although a few organizations, led by the maintenance-of-way employees, the journeymen tailors, the coopers', and typographers' unions, soon responded to his appeal, the process of conversion in the

<sup>25</sup> In 1912, apparently with the intention of giving additional guaranties to the organizing and jurisdictional rights of the internationals against the renewed ambitions of purely Canadian bodies, the following statement was added to section 2: "No national union or local unions, comprising said national union, shall be entitled to membership in this Congress when there is in existence an international union of their craft, nor shall any local union attached to a national body separated from its international organization be entitled to delegates in any central body chartered by this Congress." Cf. *Labor Gazette*, XIII, 357.

<sup>26</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XIV, 439; and *Labor Gazette*, XII, 339.

majority of cases was slow. At the convention of 1907 only eleven internationals had taken the suggested step, ignorance of the advantages and the high per capita tax being apparently the chief reason for the inaction.

The logical way to carry through such an arrangement would seem to have been by using the good offices of the American Federation of Labor, and such was Mr. Draper's plan; but at first this line of endeavor does not seem to have had the desired result. We find the Boston convention of the latter body adopting the recommendation of its executive council "that all local unions in the Dominion of Canada affiliated through international unions, or holding charters from the American Federation of Labor, be notified to become affiliated with the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada for the purpose of making it a more potent factor to secure the adoption of favorable legislation for the members by the Federal and Provincial parliaments." Nothing was said, however, on the subject of paying through headquarters. After 1907 the matter was canvassed with renewed energy. At the 1908 convention the secretary was able to announce an increase of eleven headquarters affiliations during the year, and at the Norfolk convention of the American Federation of Labor the Canadian delegate made the extension of this system the chief matter of his report. The effort was continued at the Toronto convention in 1910, and again at the meeting at Atlanta the following year, when the adoption of the principle was recommended and urged upon the constituent organizations by the committee on the president's report. By 1922, fifty-six of the more important member organizations of the American Federation had affiliated the whole of their Canadian membership and were paying the regular tax, thereby greatly strengthening the position of the congress. It is also recorded that 122,723 members out of a total of 132,071 belonged to organizations, international and national, whose membership was entirely affiliated.

As regards the per capita tax of federal unions chartered by the American Federation of Labor, for more than a decade previous to 1919 the latter at its annual convention voted a sum of \$500 to the congress, but beginning with that year it discontinued the customary grant and took upon itself instead the responsibility of paying to the congress the regular per capita tax on the Canadian membership of all local unions directly affiliated with itself.<sup>27</sup> By this change these locals are brought into much the same relation with the congress, so far as payments are concerned, at least, as the great body of locals throughout the country which acknowledge an international connection, and a greater measure of consistency is thus attained.

#### PRESENT COMPOSITION, STATUS, AND MACHINERY OF OPERATION

As matters stand today, therefore, the congress is the recognized mouthpiece of Canadian organized labor in dealing with legislative matters, while it concedes to the American Federation of Labor the right to deal with trade and jurisdictional controversies in the case of all bodies acknowledging allegiance to the latter, accepting the decisions of the federation without question. In the matter of organization it has the sole right to issue charters to provincial federations and trades councils in Canada. With respect to federal unions, it shares the function of direct chartering with the American Federation of Labor, but even where these are chartered by the latter body, the congress receives from it the amount of their annual per capita tax. As regards the internationals, which make up the major part of its membership, practically all of these operating in Canada other than the railway brotherhoods acknowledge the congress and pay their per capita tax from headquarters. Apart altogether from American connection, and notwithstanding that one of its six objects, as expressed by the 1921 convention, is "to further

<sup>27</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XIX, 806.

the spirit of international trade unionism," the congress holds in affiliation several non-international central craft organizations chartered by it in competition with the Canadian Federation of Labor.

In its attempts to influence legislation the congress continues to function for the most part through the same machinery as developed in the earlier period, viz., the executive council, accompanied by members of some of the provincial executive committees, carrying the demands and recommendations of the conventions to the Dominion cabinet at the opening of the parliamentary session each winter, while the provincial executives play the same rôle with respect to the various provincial governments. Exceptions to this method are found in Alberta and New Brunswick, where the dealings with the provincial ministers are carried on by the respective local federations of labor. In these cases, while the machinery permits of a greater measure of autonomy and local initiative, co-operation is obtained and the will of the congress made effective by means of an accredited delegate of each federation attending the annual conventions of the national body. Beginning with the session of 1903-4, the congress for a number of years retained the services of a legal representative at Ottawa in the person of J. G. O'Donoghue, whose duty it was, in the capacity of an expert lobbyist, to maneuver for the introduction and progress of the measures requested by the executive council, and in fact of all bills which appeared favorable to the cause of labor. After 1910 this office of parliamentary solicitor was abolished, the work being performed in the main by the president and vice-president of the congress, the understanding being established, however, that the services of this experienced labor solicitor would be at the disposal of the executive council when required.

The basis of representation at conventions is as follows:

From local branch unions in Canada of international and national organizations and trade unions directly chartered by the congress: one dele-

gate from the first 100 members or less, and one for each additional 100 members or the majority fraction thereof; international and national organizations which have affiliated their entire membership in the Dominion are entitled to one additional delegate, to be nominated from their Canadian membership. Trades and labor councils and provincial federations of labor are entitled to three delegates each.<sup>28</sup>

The revenue, besides the fee charged for charters, is derived from a tax of 18 cents per member per year from international and national organizations and from unions chartered directly by the congress, 36 cents per member from trades and labor councils, and a lump payment of \$10 per annum from provincial federations of labor.

The congress is in affiliation with the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Women's Trade Union League of America, connection with the former being secured in June, 1920, and with the latter during the following year. For upward of a decade it has exchanged fraternal delegates with the British Trades Union Congress as well as with the American Federation of Labor, with whom it had established this laudable relation much earlier. From their inception the Trades and Labor Congress has taken an active part at the conferences of the International Labor Organization, and since 1919 has had its representative on the governing body of the International Labor Office. Within Canada the congress has its representatives on the Dominion Council of Health, the Canadian Council of Education, the Dominion Fire Prevention Association, the Employment Service Council of Canada, the Research Council of Canada, and finally on the Canadian National Railway board of directors. It also is in affiliation with the Canadian Council on Child Welfare and the League of Nations Society in Canada.<sup>29</sup> Previous to the war it was in affiliation with the Social and Mor-

<sup>28</sup> Article 5, sec. 1.

<sup>29</sup> *Proceedings of Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 24 ff.

al Reform Council of Canada, and gave considerable attention in its conventions to addresses from representatives of this organization.<sup>30</sup> Still earlier it stood in a similar relation to the Lord's Day Alliance, a body that was active in connection with the passage of the Lord's Day Act of 1906, and which later has carried on campaigns to secure the enforcement of this measure.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, *Twenty-eighth Annual Convention*, p. 75.

## CHAPTER VI

### ACTIVITIES OF THE CONGRESS SINCE 1902

#### I. PRINCIPLES: ALTERATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT IN TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

The platform of principles upon which the congress took its stand in 1898 was as follows: (1) free compulsory education; (2) legal working day of eight hours and six days to a week; (3) government inspection of all industries; (4) the abolition of the contract system on all public works; (5) a minimum living wage based on local conditions; (6) public ownership of all franchises, such as railways, telegraph, waterworks, lighting, etc.; (7) tax reform, by lessening taxation on industry and increasing it on land values; (8) abolition of the Dominion senate; (9) exclusion of Chinese; (10) the union label to be placed on all manufactured goods, where practicable, and on all government and municipal supplies; (11) abolition of child labor by children under fourteen years of age, and of female labor in all branches of industrial life, such as mines, workshops, factories, etc.; (12) abolition of property qualification for all public offices; (13) voluntary arbitration of labor disputes; (14) proportional representation with grouped constituencies, and abolition of municipal wards; (15) direct legislation through the initiative and referendum; (16) prohibition of prison labor in competition with free labor.<sup>1</sup> This platform stood intact until 1914, when, in keeping with rising standards of education, the period of exclusion of children from industry was raised from fourteen to sixteen years, and the exclusion of female workers from industrial life was replaced by the more modern plank, "Equal pay for equal work for men and women."

<sup>1</sup> A seventeenth plank was added in 1913, calling for equal suffrage for men and women, but it was dropped in 1921.

In 1921 the whole platform was revamped and the nineteen planks resulting were shaped to express the aims of the congress at that time. Since then there have been no alterations. A comparison between the new and old platforms indicates far-reaching changes in the objectives of Canada's leading labor body. Planks 3, 4, 5, 12, 15, and 16 of the group listed were dropped entirely, some due to the fact that the grievance no longer existed; others through their being considered no longer desirable; No. 2 was changed to read "forty-four hours per week" instead of "six days"; No. 6 was liberalized, and reads, "Public ownership and democratic management of all public utilities"; similarly, No. 8 was worded "Abolition of non-elective legislative bodies," whereas before it had been limited to the Dominion senate; and No. 9 was changed to include all "Asiatics." The rewriting of No. 7 gives voice to an essential change in taxation policy, the new rendering being "Revenue by direct taxation"; No. 10 was not essentially changed; No. 14 reappeared without the last clause, which had been deleted. Of the whole series only Nos. 1 and 13 remained unchanged.

Further, the following new planks appeared in the 1921 platform: (*a*) insertion and enforcement of fair wage regulations (based on established union conditions) on government work, direct or indirect; (*b*) government control and fullest development of all natural resources; (*c*) establishment of a tariff board on which labor is represented; (*d*) the encouragement of establishment of workers' co-operative societies; (*e*) unemployment insurance; (*f*) old-age pensions; state insurance for sickness and disability; (*g*) uniformity of labor laws throughout the Dominion; (*h*) disarmament.

## II. ACTIVITIES OF THE CONGRESS CENTERING CHIEFLY IN LEGISLATIVE LOBBYING

### A. IMMIGRATION

As in the earlier period immigration continued to be one of the chief subjects engaging the attention of the congress. Early in the century we find the British and Canadian delegates to the

conventions of the American Federation of Labor getting together to discuss remedies for evils in connection with immigrants from Britain, and President Flett, addressing the 1904 convention of the congress, declared that "something must be done to prevent the large and indiscriminate importation by steamship companies, philanthropic societies and others, of those with criminal tendencies, and other undesirable classes, who often become a charge on the community." "Of late," he continued, "an inferior class of immigrants are arriving from Continental Europe; they do not assimilate, are very slow to adopt our methods of living, herding on the communal plan. For such foreigners, coming from outside the British Isles, the Government was paying one pound per head."<sup>2</sup>

Much of the effort of the congress at this time and for some years subsequent was directed against misrepresentation to potential immigrants by the employing interests in Canada. In 1904, through its parliamentary solicitor, Mr. J. G. O'Donoghue, it prevailed upon the government to take some action looking to remedy. Mr. Sifton, Minister of the Interior in the Canadian cabinet, communicated with the British authorities, asking them to take steps to punish those who, in Great Britain, were guilty of misrepresenting conditions in Canada to prospective immigrants. He also published broadcast in Great Britain advertisements warning immigrants against fake labor bureaus, and advising the public that the government did not encourage the immigration of mechanics to Canada. Blame was put upon the Canadian Manufacturers' Association and the Employers' Association of Toronto for much of the misrepresentation. Provisions for punishment of offenders were incorporated in an alien labor bill

<sup>2</sup> *Proceedings of Twentieth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 12. During 23 years, 1900-23, Canada received 3,740,197 immigrants, the period of most rapid migration being 1910-14. Of this number, 1,397,059 came from the British Isles, 1,417,959 from the United States, and 925,179 from other sources. In the decade 1914-23, however, the balance of migration between Canada and the United States has been consistently in favor of the latter, the 1923 figures showing as follows: American immigrants into Canada, 22,039; Canadian emigrants to the United States, 117,011.

which was brought before parliament at this time.<sup>3</sup> The clauses dealing with misrepresentation were intended to apply to offenses in foreign countries as well as in Britain, a case in point which had greatly incensed labor opinion at the time being the importation, by means characterized by Mr. O'Donoghue as fraudulent, of large numbers of Italians into Montreal by a labor agent named Antonio Cordasco. The bill failed to pass the senate, but the following year the passages having to do with misrepresentation were framed into a separate measure which passed both houses. The Canadian Manufacturers' Association indorsed the bill, with an amendment making it applicable to false representations to deter immigration.<sup>4</sup>

In spite of this preventive legislation, the evil practice persisted. During the following year flagrant cases were reported, in particular from Winnipeg, where the master-plumbers were reported as guilty of enticing English plumbers to the city without information that the object of their coming was to break a strike of the local journeymen plumbers, and where the local Typothetae, backed financially by the United Typothetae of America, dispatched an agent to Great Britain with "power to hire and transport printers to Winnipeg" in order to defeat the efforts of the International Typographical Union, which had se-

<sup>3</sup> *Proceedings of Twentieth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-first Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 14. The present Canadian law relating to this matter, as stated under sec. 55 of the Act Respecting Alien Labor, etc., Statutes of 1910, reads as follows: "Every person who causes or procures the publication or circulation, by advertisement or otherwise, in a country outside of Canada, of false representations as to the opportunities for employment in Canada, or as to the state of the labour market in Canada, intended or adapted to encourage or induce, or to deter or prevent, the immigration into Canada of persons resident in such outside country . . . shall be guilty of an offense against this Act, and liable . . . to a fine of not more than five hundred dollars, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or to both fine and imprisonment." See *Labor Legislation in Canada* (as existing December 31, 1920), p. 110.

lected the city as one of the central points for the eight-hour contest with the United Typothetae.<sup>5</sup>

It was now felt that if the evil were to be remedied it must be struck at at its source. Accordingly we find Secretary Draper communicating with the Minister of Labor in August, 1906, requesting him to send a representative to London to secure the passage of an act by the Imperial Parliament similar to that already passed in Canada. As a result, Deputy-Minister King was ordered to England to impress upon the British authorities the urgency of the need for action in this important matter.<sup>6</sup> The mission proved eminently successful, the British Parliament responding with the following amendment to the Merchants' Shipping Act: "If any person, by any false representation, fraud, or false pretense, induces or attempts to induce any person to emigrate or to engage a steerage passage in any ship, he shall for each offense be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds, or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months."<sup>7</sup>

Not content with relying upon governmental endeavors for protection of Canadian laborers from the invasion of unregulated immigration, the congress began as early as 1905 to advocate co-ordinated trade-union action between Canada and Great Britain. More specifically, it recommended that communication should be carried on between each trade union in Canada and the corresponding organization in Great Britain, "so that all parties concerned would be well informed as to the conditions of the labor market on both sides of the Atlantic." It also recommended that "some system be adopted by which the Secretary of the Trades and Labor Congress should be in touch with the leaders

<sup>5</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 58-60.

<sup>7</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-third Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 46.

of the movement in the old country, so that the machinations of scheming employers could be offset by concerted action between the old country and this."<sup>8</sup>

Beginning in 1907, the congress became even more aggressive in its policy of direct effort. In accordance with a decision at the Winnipeg convention we find it sending its own representative in the person of Mr. W. R. Trotter to the mother-country to counteract the ever busy agents of the Canadian manufacturers and the well-meaning but irresponsible British charitable societies, and to make direct appeal to organized British labor to use its machinery in favor of the brothers in Canada.<sup>9</sup> Mr. Trotter went on his mission well equipped with statistics, especially from western cities, calculated to set forth the conditions of the labor market. Welcomed by the British labor leaders, he held mass meetings in the large industrial centers, distributed pamphlets, and attended the Scottish labor convention. Everywhere he attempted to make an exposé of false representations concerning Canadian labor demands as made by employers' agents and as found in the major part of the British press—especially the papers advocating the policies of Joseph Chamberlain—and pleaded for the elimination of the private profit element, "whether under the guise of charity or not."<sup>10</sup>

Having returned to Canada and delivered a detailed account of his campaign and the forces operating to stimulate immigration to the congress, he was sent across a second time to continue his work. On this occasion he was further armed with a report on immigration prepared by the congress. He attended both the British and Scottish conventions, challenged the figures published in the magazine *Canada*, which, he maintained, reflected

<sup>8</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 12, 47.

<sup>9</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-fourth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 31.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

the mind of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association,<sup>11</sup> and took issue with statements being made by officers of the Salvation Army and other organizations. On his return he brought to the attention of the congress that the Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk railways and the Allen Line of steamships were encouraging skilled mechanics to emigrate contrary to the spirit of the federal law.

These direct-action activities of the congress doubtless did much to enlighten the British worker as to conditions and attitudes in Canada, and, through the reports brought back, to acquaint Canadian labor with what was taking place in England to

<sup>11</sup> The Canadian Manufacturers' Association has been holding annual conventions since 1871. In 1902 it was incorporated under an act of Parliament, its stated objects being to promote Canadian industries and to further the interests of Canadian manufacturers and exporters. To this end it was given, among other powers, the right to publish pamphlets and periodicals, to obtain information and statistics, and to appoint committees to inquire into any matter affecting the manufacturing interests. Specifically, some of the chief matters which it has sponsored have been adequate transportation facilities (including regulation of railway rates by a government commission), a tariff affording protection to Canadian industries, an immigration policy favorable to the acquisition of skilled mechanics abroad where "there has been a shortage of such labor in Canada," state provision of technical education.

Its advertising organ, *Industrial Canada*, has been widely circulated, especially in Great Britain, and through its columns and through other activities of its London office, the workers' opportunities in Canada—especially those affecting skilled labor—have been well advertised. Considerable attention naturally has been given to the problems of industrial relations. While declaring itself not opposed to unions as such, it has raised its voice at different times against their domination by foreign leaders and pleaded for their freedom from foreign affiliation. In a platform of principles in 1903 it announced its stand on the open-shop policy, and following the war it was foremost in promoting the industrial-councils movement as a solution of labor difficulties. Generally it has opposed the ingress of the workmen's compensation principle, and more recently has sought to guard against any further advance in the amount of compensation allowed. While in various instances it has sought to co-operate with organized labor—notably in the promotion of technical education and in facing the problems of reconstruction—in the main its legislative committees have opposed the lobbyists of the T. and L. C. both at Ottawa and in the various provincial capitals.



The immigration policy of the congress, as laid down at the Victoria convention in 1906 and reaffirmed at subsequent conventions, was included in the following points:

1. Recognition of Canada's need of an influx of population of the right quality.

2. That this influx should be the spontaneous movement of the immigrants themselves, and in this regard we declare against any system of assisted immigration or the granting of bonuses for that purpose.

3. . . . The exclusion of certain nationalities and classes of people who either by temperament, non-assimilative qualifications, habits, customs, or want of any permanent good which their coming brings to us, are not a desirable acquisition to our citizenship. [Expressly named under this heading were Chinese, Hindus, and all other Asiatic peoples.]

Much attention was given to combating the government's bonus system, whereby five dollars per head was paid on any persons (including mechanics) who were willing to declare their intention of engaging in agriculture in Canada. In 1906 new departmental regulations were procured restricting the bonus to persons whose occupation had been, for at least one year previous to emigrating, one of the following: "Farmers, farm laborers, gardeners, stablemen, carters, railway section men, *navvies* or miners who had signified their intention of following farming in Canada, and to domestic servants."<sup>13</sup>

Efforts to abolish this monetary stimulus seem to have been of little effect. A bill brought before the House in 1907 with this as its object was negatived without a vote. For one year, 1907-8, the report to the congress gave the expenditure for this purpose as \$140,657.97, more than \$90,000 of which went to British immigrants, and the greater part of the remainder to those hailing from continental Europe.<sup>14</sup> At the 1908 convention it was stated

<sup>13</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 48.

<sup>14</sup> According to the figures given in this report, only some \$5,000 of this was expended as commissions on American immigrants. In general the attitude of the congress has been more favorable to the influx from the South, which, in the decade before the war, was about equal in numbers with that from Great Brit-

that the amount expended since 1900 had been \$690,609.11. It was brought out at the same time that the government was contributing to the rental of the Salvation Army offices in Great Britain and otherwise assisting that organization. Against all such activities the congress continued to voice its protest. In 1908 the executive committee recommended that the congress demand of the federal government that the present system of bonusing steamship companies, immigration, and all other agencies be discontinued, and that the system of inspection at the ports of entry be reorganized upon such a basis as to guarantee the exclusion of those mentally, morally, or physically unfit. It also recommended that central labor bodies collect statistics bearing upon immigration for informational purposes.<sup>15</sup> These efforts of Labor were not without their reward, for we find the congress in 1910 expressing satisfaction over the new restrictions imposed by the government affecting the activities of emigration societies and on account of the further limitation of the classes upon which bonuses would be paid. It also greeted with approval the stipulation that each newcomer must have twenty-five dollars in his possession in addition to his ticket. On the other hand, we find it arming against a new menace in the shape of a system of "imperial labor exchanges," which was in effect a project for the extension of the British labor exchange system to cover the whole empire, and was sponsored at this time by a British member of parliament. It was argued at the convention that such a system would bring Canadian and British labor to a common wage level, and further, that it would serve as a piece

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ain. For instance, we find Mr. Trotter defending it against being the cause of unemployment in Canada at this time by the statement that the 180,000 newcomers from the United States for the three years 1906-9 were chiefly farmers with capital stock and experience. On the other hand we find organizer Tom Moore vigorously demanding the deportation of a band of American mechanics brought into Ontario as strikebreakers in 1917.

<sup>15</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-fourth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 8.

of machinery for strikebreaking. As expressed by Mr. Trotter, it was a "touch the button and get the goods" arrangement for Canadian employers.<sup>16</sup>

The determined opposition of the congress and the labor press led Sir Wilfrid Laurier, at the Imperial Conference of 1911, to nip the project in the bud.<sup>17</sup> Sir Wilfrid remarked, in explanation of his action, that the London office of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, which had been opened in similar vein to secure skilled help for its members, had not proved a satisfactory experiment and had been closed. Notwithstanding this action of the Canadian Premier, the idea was again being advanced by certain British leaders just prior to the outbreak of the war.

In 1912 we find the congress indorsing its former policies, condemning especially the granting of bonuses to immigrants shipped to industrial centers, and protesting against the withdrawal, even temporarily, of the landing money provision heretofore mentioned.

Considerable of the endeavor of the congress with respect to immigration turned on the operation of the Alien Labor Law, whose purposes and administrative difficulties we have already discussed.<sup>18</sup> With a view to making it more workable from labor's standpoint, the congress, through its parliamentary solicitor, sought to make modifications in the act of 1904, but, after securing its passage in the House, it had to face the disappointment of having the amendments "talked out" in the Senate. This law, before now unsatisfactory enough, was further damaged in 1904 when Justice Anglin handed down a decision declaring deportation by the Dominion government to be *ultra*

<sup>16</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 42.

<sup>17</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-seventh Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>18</sup> Pp. 68-9.

*vires* of the latter's powers.<sup>19</sup> Although this decision, which the congress termed "a monstrosity," was later reversed, the act was described by solicitor O'Donoghue in 1906 as "practically a dead letter," since the government only professed power to deport men when it "saw fit"; otherwise maintaining that it devolved upon private individuals to bring action, and this process was so slow that it meant the loss of the strike in any case.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless we find one of the lieutenants of the congress, in the person of Gustav Francq, of the Quebec executive committee, bringing an action under the act shortly after this against the Dominion Car Company for violation of its terms in importing foreigners under contract.<sup>21</sup>

The condition of the law with respect to this matter remained generally unsatisfactory to labor until 1910, when, under the statute entitled "Alien Labor, Protection of Immigrant Laborers, . . . ." a means of relief was afforded in section 66 which ruled as follows: "The Governor in Council may make such regulations and impose such penalties as are deemed expedient to safeguard the interests of immigrants seeking employment from any companies, firms, or persons carrying on the business of intelligence offices or employment of labor agencies at any place in Canada."

Furthermore, under this authority, regulations were issued in May, 1913, to the effect that "every employment agency having dealings with immigrants is required to obtain a license for the purpose from the superintendent of Immigration, and to keep records respecting the immigrants doing business at the of-

<sup>19</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-first Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 11-14.

<sup>20</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-second Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 45.

<sup>21</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-third Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 18.

fice." They also contain provisions governing the engaging of immigrants for employers by such agencies.<sup>22</sup>

Notwithstanding the potential protection against this and other legislation passed in 1910, we find the congress complaining even more bitterly at the 1914 convention, this time the charge being the unprecedented laxity of enforcement of existing laws. In fact it entertained a motion of censure against the Borden government for indorsing what it called the inaccurate statements of the advertisers for immigration and in setting at naught the honest expressions of opinion made by writers seeking to present the actual conditions in Canada.<sup>23</sup>

At this convention also the congress began its demand for a complete change of methods for the control of immigration, the central feature of which was the establishment of a central board as a department of the Imperial Government to which a representative of each Dominion might be added. This board was to have complete control of all emigration from the British Isles; all agencies were to be compelled to take a license from it; and such licenses were to be subject to revocation by it if in its judgment it was desirable to terminate the activities of any agency. This idea of co-ordination through imperial machinery, although later somewhat modified in the details, gripped the imagination of the congress for years, but, due to opposition from British shipping interests, among others, it was never carried out in any complete sense. In 1917 we find President Watters putting the matter even stronger for government control. In a letter to the president of the British Trades Union Congress he stated that the Canadian congress stood "for the abolition of every private immigration agency and for the co-operation of the Imperial with the Dominion Government direct to regulate

<sup>22</sup> *Labor Legislation in Canada* (as existing December 31, 1920), p. 110.

<sup>23</sup> *Proceedings of Thirtieth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 19, 119.

migration through a Joint Board.”<sup>24</sup> For a number of years hereafter, until other developments had usurped the functions which it was expected to perform, each annual delegation to the Dominion Government sought the establishment of such a “central immigration authority” and requested the appointment to it of a representative of the congress.

*Post-war activities with respect to immigration.*—The machinery which was created at the close of the war to take care of the whole problem of human reinstatement and to deal with matters of migration and unemployment, then and thereafter, consisted, so far as it directly affected Canada and Canadian immigration, of several pieces. In the first place, there is the International Labor Office, with its Immigration Commission. In this, if it can be made to operate effectively, the leaders of Canadian labor have pictured an agency of control, of greater possibilities than even a central British board, inasmuch as it offers some guaranty of protection against an undesired influx, not only from the British Isles, but from continental Europe as well. As soon as the Immigration Commission was appointed in 1921 the congress began to use its services as an information distributor and guide to European workers regarding labor conditions and population needs in Canada. Working through Mr. Obed Smith, the Dominion immigration superintendent in London, and Canada’s appointee on the Commission, it furnished the latter with detailed reports of its conventions in so far as they dealt with matters affecting immigration policy.

Secondly, there was created in Canada in 1918, in connection with the Department of Labor, a governmental body called the Employment Service Council of Canada, which, in addition to co-ordinating the activities of the government employment agencies in Canada, has, in the pursuance of its object of limiting unemployment, done much to control the human influx in

<sup>24</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-third Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 99.

the lean years since 1920. In all such efforts it has the support and the applause of the congress, one of whose officers sits upon it as a regular member.<sup>25</sup> Thus, in the spring of 1921 we find President Moore reprimanding the Ontario government for placing immigrants, who had come in response to its advertising in Britain, through the colonization branch of the agricultural department of the province, and for failing to act through the Employment Service Council, it being his contention that the names of all such people should be listed on the Council's register. Again at the 1921 convention we find the executive council reporting that the "employment service branch of the Department of Labor had rendered valuable assistance in checking indiscriminate importation of industrial workers into Canada," denying applications from employers who would have brought in thousands of immigrants.<sup>26</sup> And the delegation from the congress to the Dominion government in February, 1923, sought to have included in the term "prohibited classes" in the immigration law all labor hired outside of Canada except it be secured through the Employment Service of Canada.<sup>27</sup>

A second body operating in Canada which took upon itself some of the functions assigned by labor to the proposed imperial board, and which was given the support of the congress until such time as the latter should be created, was the Canadian Council of Immigration of Women. Its purpose was to bring over from Europe women for household service, a class of immigrants who, along with agricultural workers, the government had always favored and to whom labor offered no objection so long

<sup>25</sup> *Proceedings of Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 30.

<sup>26</sup> *Proceedings of Thirty-seventh Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 78.

<sup>27</sup> With the old idea of an imperial labor board still slumbering, the congress, in 1920, made some effort to institute a "system of co-operation between Dominion employment bureaus and the British or other government labor exchanges." Cf. *Labor Gazette*, XX, 1341.

as the agencies of importation were subject to government control. In this respect the Council of Women qualified, and in 1919 we find the congress appointing a representative to serve on it. Subsequent conventions likewise indorsed its activities and its receipt of government grants, while that of 1920 asked that the scope of its operations be extended and that grants to all other organizations engaged in this type of work be discontinued.

Certain special problems relating to immigration were born of the war and the turbulent conditions immediately following it which have engaged the attention of the congress at considerable length in recent years. One of these was the ill-founded worry during the war of great numbers of British and citizens of the European allies of Britain who, it was conjectured, would seek homes in Canada with the return of peace. A second was a scheme of the Salvation Army to send large numbers of British "war widows" into the self-governing Dominions. With the latter the congress took issue, contending that it was the duty of each country to assume the burden of its own dependents. A third, and one which still continues to ruffle the waters, first made its appearance in connection with the Winnipeg strike in the spring of 1919. It is the problem of deportation of the British-born citizens resident in Canada. Although the parties directly affected at that time were involved in an action repudiated by the congress, and, in fact, engaged in the creation of a rival organization, the congress intervened in their behalf and requested the repeal of the amendments recently passed which made such arbitrary deportation possible. The demand has been repeated by each annual delegation to Parliament since that date, but although it has since succeeded before the House of Commons, it has failed to become law. Other demands of a like nature, but not concerning exclusively British-born, that have been made in recent years are the insertion of a clause in the Immigration Act granting the right of trial by jury before any deportations for political offenses have been made, and the re-

peal of certain amendments passed during the same ill-starred parliamentary session in 1919, which, it is claimed, bring within the phrase "prohibited classes" those exercising the reasonable right of assembly and freedom of speech.<sup>28</sup>

At the 1921 convention the congress threatened a radical change in its immigration policy. Moved by the failure to stop the bringing in of immigrants although the country was already suffering from a great deal of unemployment, the special committee on unemployment and immigration brought in a recommendation for the "absolute prohibition of all immigration from European countries for a period of two years at least, with the exception only in cases of farm workers or settlers on the land who can prove their bona fide character." President Moore, however, and certain other officers argued that the provision was too drastic, and the exception was extended to cover classes exempted by the act.<sup>29</sup>

The following year at Montreal the congress swung back into line with its declared policies of years before, the executive committee in its report taking its stand on the platform of principles with regard to immigration as enunciated in 1906,<sup>30</sup> and stating in addition that it was of the opinion that entire prohibition "is not practicable or advisable."

As for control, it declared that experience showed that the head tax and monetary provisions were inefficient methods of restricting immigration, "as by the provision of circulating funds amongst certain peoples and financing of others by employers, these regulations have been circumvented to the disadvantage of the worker. . . ."<sup>31</sup> It therefore expressed the opinion that efforts must be continued along the lines of government supervi-

<sup>28</sup> *Canadian Congress Journal* (February, 1923), p. 51.

<sup>29</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-seventh Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 204, 217.

<sup>30</sup> See p. 197.

<sup>31</sup> The \$25 landing requisite had been increased in 1920 to \$250.

sion and regulation.<sup>32</sup> Beginning with 1914, for a few years the congress had gone on record as being in favor of the literacy test, but in 1917 opposition arose on the ground that such a method discriminated in favor of the privileged, and the provision was voted down. In its representations to Parliament in 1926 the congress called for the creation of a Dominion council on immigration, on which labor should have representation, for the co-ordination of federal, provincial, and other immigration activities.<sup>33</sup>

*Asiatic immigration.*—As regards Asiatic immigration, the voice of the congress has constantly been for total exclusion. The convention of 1910 will serve as an example of the earlier period. On that occasion the demand was as follows: “. . . . Total restriction of this class of immigrant—Japanese or Chinese—or, failing this, that the tax on Chinese be increased from \$500 to \$1,000; that the control of Japanese immigration be removed from the hands of the Japanese government and placed where it rightfully belongs—in the hands of the Canadian government; and that immigration from India continue, as now, totally restricted.”<sup>34</sup>

Beginning in 1917, a new alternative, in the event of total exclusion failing to carry with parliament, was introduced and favored in place of the head tax. It called for the limitation of Asiatics to one in one thousand of the population of the Dominion at the time. Subsequently this demand was dropped and

<sup>32</sup> *Canadian Congress Journal* (February, 1923), p. 51.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* (April, 1926).

<sup>34</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-sixth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 74. Some idea of the efficacy of the use of the head tax as a controller of Chinese immigration is to be obtained from comparing the arrivals before and after the two increases of this tax. In 1900 the number paying the \$50 tax was 4,231. In 1901, when the amount had been increased to \$100, the number dropped to 2,518, but rose again to 5,245 in 1903. With the increase to \$500 in 1904, the number fell to 8 in 1905, but climbed again to 1,614 in 1910 and to 4,515 in 1911. See *Canada Yearbook*, 1911, p. 395.

reliance was had upon reiterating the demands for total exclusion, the repeal of certain clauses in the treaty between Great Britain and Japan which fix the status of Japanese in Canada, the deportation of aliens found guilty under the Narcotic Drug Act, and legislation for the more effective control of Orientals already in Canada.<sup>35</sup>

*Summary.*—The congress throughout the period has acknowledged the need of immigration of certain classes, but has declared it to be the right and the duty of the government to exclude people incapable of assimilation and to discriminate among potential immigrants on the basis of occupation. It has carried on a constant campaign against misrepresentation, redoubling its efforts during years of industrial depression. It has combated bonus-granting and government aids to irresponsible agencies, and has denounced in particular the work of the Salvation Army for bringing out a class of people who, in spite of their pretensions toward agriculture, soon drift into the industrial centers. It has sought protection for Canadian labor through new legislation, and has reprimanded governments for failing to enforce such laws as existed. Following an unsuccessful attempt to set up an imperial immigration board, it has directed its efforts in recent years toward placing the entire matter of bringing in immigrants in the hands of federal government agencies, thus making possible an intelligent co-ordination of immigration with the needs of industry. Coincident with this it has advocated closer relations between the Department of Labor and the federal immigration authorities, suggesting the transfer of the latter to make them responsible to the Minister of Labor.

<sup>35</sup> Complete exclusion of Chinese, except persons categorized as merchants or students, has been operative since October, 1923. Under the agreement between the Canadian and Japanese Governments, by which the latter undertakes to limit the number of Japanese emigrants to 150 per year, there is still some dissatisfaction and protest that the number is being exceeded. See *Canadian Annual Review*, 1924-25, p. 195.

## B. UNEMPLOYMENT

The depressed conditions of the later nineteenth century, as we have noted in a previous chapter, gave occasion for a recommendation by the congress for action to secure a federal system of employment bureaus to cover the whole country. Little seems to have resulted from this declaration, and the imagination of organized labor shows no evidence of having risen again to such heights with respect to this problem for many years. Beginning with 1905 there was an intermittent controversy between employers' and workers' interests on the subject of whether there was or was not a sufficiency of workmen in the country to meet the needs of the labor market; but the battle was waged in the main around the question of immigration, the employers' associations operating both directly and through the governments to increase the numbers of newcomers, while the forces of organized labor sought to limit the influx. Much of the trouble of the time, however, appears to have been due to the poor organization of the labor market, a condition which resulted in neither side being able to substantiate its position. A resolution by the convention of 1905 reflecting this latter aspect of the situation and labor's proposed remedy read:

Whereas, the manufacturers' and employers' associations of Canada are continually claiming that there is a scarcity of skilled workmen in Canada, and are invariably asking for more men; and, whereas, there is not, at present, any method of obtaining correct information or statistics in this matter; therefore be it resolved, that the incoming provincial executives be instructed to request the Provincial Legislatures to establish employment bureaus in all the leading cities in Canada.

At the convention of 1906 the same sentiment was reiterated in a resolution emanating from the delegates of the Trades and Labor Council of Victoria, British Columbia, and asking in addition that these free employment bureaus be under the administration of the various provincial governments.<sup>36</sup> At the convention of

<sup>36</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-second Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 77.

the following year the Ontario executive committee reported that: "Government bureaus have been established in Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Peterborough, and other centers, but your Executive is not in a position to state whether they are a benefit or a detriment to Organized Labor."<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless the congress reaffirmed its position and the demand was continued. In 1909 we find a motion coming from the Montreal Trades Council picturing a disgraceful exploitation of labor at the hands of commercial employment bureaus in the province of Quebec and particularly in the city of Montreal, and urging that "an immediate stop be put to these deplorable conditions." The resolution, which was concurred in by the convention, requested "that the incoming Executive be authorized to take the necessary means to bring this matter before the Federal, Provincial and Municipal authorities, so that in cities with a population of 75,000 or over, an employment bureau or bureaus shall be maintained by the above mentioned authorities, and that the transactions of the said bureaus shall be reported to the public quarterly."<sup>38</sup> In 1910 we find that the provincial executive committee had succeeded in getting such a bill through the Quebec legislature and were busy in keeping its administration from falling into the hands of political appointees, and thus making it a dead letter.<sup>39</sup> In this ambition its efforts were again rewarded through the appointment of a trade unionist as superintendent of the provincial free employment bureaus.<sup>40</sup> Following the example of Quebec and Ontario, the executive committees of the prairie provinces were likewise pressing for government-operated employment bu-

<sup>37</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-third Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 15.

<sup>38</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 89.

<sup>39</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-sixth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 26.

<sup>40</sup> *Proceedings of Twenty-seventh Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 46.

reus in the years immediately preceding the war, and in 1914 the committee for New Brunswick voiced the same demand at Fredericton.<sup>41</sup>

*Imperial labor exchange.*—The period 1910–14 was marked by the activities of the promoters of the proposed imperial labor exchanges, mentioned heretofore. To this scheme, prior to the development of a national employment service in Canada, the congress offered its continued opposition. As expressed by the executive council at the Fort William convention in 1910, it was both afraid of its results and suspicious of its motives. The message of the council on that occasion was as follows:

We believe that until such time as Canada itself has taken steps to demonstrate her need of Labor Exchanges within the Dominion, that so-called "Imperial" Labor Exchanges have no reason for existence. The establishment of "Imperial" Labor Exchanges at the present time would simply, we believe, enable those disposed to do so, to dump batches of workmen in the localities affected by industrial disputes, with the result of unsettling local labor markets and causing intense dissatisfaction in the community affected. We further believe that the idea of the so-called "Imperial" Labor Exchange supporter is not so much to satisfy the needs of any particular industry as it is to get rid of an undoubted surplus in Great Britain without regard to the local requirements in Canada. . . . We feel that the emigration societies of Great Britain are largely the promoters of

<sup>41</sup> Roughly speaking, the period 1900–1913 was one of industrial development for Canada and no large amount of unemployment, as compared with the figures of 1914–16 and 1920–25, existed. The Ontario government appointed a few part-time employment agents during the slackness of 1907–8, and Quebec passed the law here referred to for the establishment of regular employment offices in its chief cities. A British Columbia royal commission called for provincial public offices in 1914 with a national system of employment exchanges, as did also an Ontario commission two years later, but until well into the war period, apart from certain activities of temporary public agencies for the distribution of farm hands during the harvest season in the prairie provinces, the public machinery for assisting in the organization of the labor market was limited to ten or twelve unco-ordinated employment offices in Ontario and Quebec. Opinion, however, was being stirred, and along with the beginnings of governmental attention to this project went the demand for the abolition of the private commercial exchange. See B. M. Stewart, in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (May, 1923).

the "Imperial" idea, and we have occasion to suspect that there is more behind the movement than the simple desire to benefit either the workers of this country or the workers of Great Britain.<sup>42</sup>

And now for a time the attention of the congress began to turn for relief once more to the federal government. This was due probably to the failure of the young provincial labor exchanges to cope with the greatly increased unemployment problem with which the country was confronted. In his report to the 1914 convention, President Watters stated that the Minister of Labor had been interviewed on two occasions during the year "by a delegation representative of business, employing, and working-class interests, with regard to the establishment of labor bureaus"; and that upon learning of the Minister's sympathy with the project, the members of the delegation had drafted a memorial petitioning him to collect all necessary data to support a bill for the establishment of a chain of bureaus at the earliest possible moment. He stated also that he had appeared before the senate committee on labor and immigration some time previously, in company with the Assistant Superintendent of Immigration, and Miss Wileman, advocate for the imperial exchange idea, and had supported the plea for free labor bureaus to be established by the Dominion government.<sup>42a</sup>

*Special war proposals.*—In 1915, stimulated in part by continuing unemployment and in part by the anticipated congestion of the labor market when the war should have terminated and thousands of soldiers and munition workers should be set free to return to the regular industrial life of the nation, the congress indorsed the suggestion of its executive council that a demand be made for a federal commission to investigate the

<sup>42</sup> Copied from Secretary Draper's letter to the Minister of Labor, *Proceedings of Twenty-seventh Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 15.

<sup>42a</sup> *Proceedings of Thirtieth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 57-58.

whole problem of unemployment and commence immediate steps of relief. As drawn up by its Special Committee on Immigration and Unemployment, and ratified by the convention the chief proposals of the congress at this time were as follows:

That the Executive Council and the Provincial Executive urge upon their respective governments the necessity for the adoption of a six-hour day law covering the workers in all industries in their several jurisdictions.

That the Federal and Provincial Governments be requested to begin without delay any buildings or other public works contemplated or necessary in order to assist in relieving the congestion of the labor market.

That a Department of Labor . . . be created by each Provincial Government.

An adherence to the principle adopted last convention . . . that while the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada is emphatically opposed to the establishment of Provincial Labor Exchanges, that the Trades and Labor Councils be requested to press the legislation establishing free municipal labor bureaus in every large center for the purpose of registering the unemployed men and women workers, and the abolition of all private employment agencies.

That the Federal Government be requested to offer, as an option to discharge from the army, further enlistment for a period of five years of such men as would be willing to undertake agricultural work under the direction of qualified experts from Experimental Farms and Agricultural Colleges [having first selected such lands as might be necessary to the carrying out of such a scheme].<sup>43</sup>

Whatever may have been the reason for the antagonism, developed in 1914 and continuing for some years, toward provincial labor bureaus is not brought out in the reports. But clearly the trend of thinking at the time was in favor of municipal bureaus with which the trades and labor councils of the various centers could co-operate. Such free civic exchanges were doing good work at Winnipeg and Edmonton. In 1916 federal co-ordination was likewise repudiated by the congress, a motion expressing the opinion that "labor bureaus should be handled as federal organizations with central control and each province be

<sup>43</sup> *Proceedings of Thirty-first Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 100-105.

compelled to keep a certain number in operation" being defeated in the convention.

*Post-war activities: congress indorses federal system; is given representation on board.*—Although some of the proposals of the congress in 1915 foreshadow the attitude of labor to the question of unemployment at the close of the war, the period beginning with 1918 and lasting down to the present time may well be set apart from all that went before by reason of the new demands and new activities in which organized labor has indulged in its effort to play its part in meeting this great problem. The change has been due in part to altered conditions, in part to the connection of the congress with the International Labor Organization, but especially to the achievement by the congress of representation on the federal body in Canada having for its purpose the handling of the problem of employment.

In regard to the last of these points, when the labor leaders were called to Ottawa at the beginning of 1918 to confer with the "Union" government on matters relating to the carrying on of the war, and the representatives of the provincial governments, also present at the capital at that time, submitted to them their proposal for "the abolition of private employment bureaus and the addition to and encouragement of provincial and municipal employment agencies, and also the creation of a Dominion exchange for the tabulation of statistics and the standardization of such bureaus," they agreed only providing (1) that the control should be "regulated by advisory boards, on which labor should have equal representation," and (2) that their acceptance should be conditional, depending on the nature of the regulations to be drawn up governing these bureaus.<sup>44</sup> The congress at its convention in Quebec some months later approved the terms of the federal measure, known as the Employment Offices Co-ordination Act, which had resulted from these deliberations and which had

<sup>44</sup> *Proceedings of Thirty-fourth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 17.

received the royal assent on May 24, 1918. Some of the principal features of this Act, as also of the orders-in-council containing the regulations governing its administration, are the following:

To encourage provincial governments to establish free employment offices which shall attempt to fill all vacancies in all occupations and which shall serve both male and female employees; to effect the co-ordination of these offices and promote uniformity of methods; to establish provincial and interprovincial clearance systems that will provide for the transfer of unemployed labor to suitable vacancies that may exist in other districts or provinces; and to collect, compile, and publish information relative to employment conditions received from the employment offices or from other sources.<sup>45</sup>

The Act provides for the establishment of a body to be known as the Employment Service Council of Canada, which shall meet annually for the purpose of deliberating on subjects vitally relevant to employment service work and which shall "pass on its decisions in an advisory capacity" to the Minister of Labor. Of its sixteen members, two are appointed by the Trades and Labor Congress and one by the railway brotherhoods. Provision is also made for the establishment of provincial and local advisory councils to consist of equal numbers of persons representing labor and employers. A further feature contained in the agreement under the Act between the federal and provincial governments is "that the latter undertake not to issue any new licenses to commercial employment agencies which charge any fee or commission, . . . or to transfer any license already issued."<sup>46</sup> Satisfied that, through these several means of control, the machinery of the Act cannot be used for any purposes injurious to the cause of organized labor, the convention of 1919 expressed its hearty appreciation of this system providing for a co-ordinated chain of employment bureaus, and its attitude of approval has since been

<sup>45</sup> R. A. Rigg, "The Relation of Organized Labor to the Unemployment Service of Canada," in *Canadian Congress Journal* (February, 1924), pp. 9-16.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

consistently maintained. Standing in contrast to its "emphatic opposition" to provincial government bureaus of a few years earlier is the "sympathetic and practical co-operation" by which, according to Mr. Rigg, the present director of the employment service, "organized labor has contributed . . . to the successful operation of the Service."<sup>47</sup>

*Recent drive for unemployment insurance; other demands.*—But, as President Watters pointed out in 1914 in his testimony before the senate committee, labor exchanges do not make employment when it does not exist. The congress has been cognizant of this and has sought in the trying period since 1920 to suggest measures that would strike closer to the roots of the problem. It has also remembered those who, in spite of the more competent organization of the labor market, are still suffering from unemployment during the whole or part of their time, and has sought repeatedly to remind the federal government of its duty, as a party to the Treaty of Peace, and more specifically as a signatory to the principle of unemployment insurance at the Washington Conference, to redeem its promise respecting this unfortunate class in Canada. In its representation to the Do-

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* The Employment Service of Canada is at present (1926) operating offices in sixty-six centers of industry, with provincial, interregional, and Dominion clearance exchanges, and facilitated by special passenger rates for long shipments under agreement with the chief railways of the country. Some notion of the extent of its operations may be had from the following figures of placements of recent years:

YEAR	PLACEMENTS		
	Regular	Casual	Total
1923 .....	347,165	115,387	462,552
1924 .....	247,425	118,707	366,132
1925 .....	306,804	106,021	412,825

It operates in connection with the labor department at Ottawa, and its reports are published each month in the *Labor Gazette*. Mr. R. A. Rigg, a former vice-president of the congress, is its present director.

minion government in January, 1924, it selected this matter of insurance from a long list of suggested remedies and pressed for the passage of an act.

A full summary of the recommendations that have been embodied in the memorandum to the government as a result of the deliberations of both the 1922 and 1923 conventions is as follows:

a) Carrying on of all public works and the purchase of public supplies during periods of depression and the allocating of the same to districts where unemployment is most acute; construction during such times of needed public buildings and the renewal and repairing of old ones; road building on a large scale; afforestation; clearing and developing of agricultural lands; limitation of the work day to eight hours on all Government works; restriction against unwarranted immigration; loans for the building of workmen's houses.

b) By the control of private industry so as to prevent: (1) the undue flooding of the labor market caused by the hiring outside of Canada of labor obtainable in Canada, or of labor needed for a limited period only; and (2) the laying off of large numbers of workers whilst orders still remain to be executed, until the hours of all employed in the industry have been materially reduced.

c) By the equalization of employment, eliminating as far as practicable rush periods with overtime, and quiet periods with consequent unemployment.

d) The abolition of private employment agencies and the fullest development of the Employment Service of Canada with Dominion, Provincial and Local Advisory Councils.<sup>48</sup>

e) Unemployment insurance to take care of those who, through the reduction of hours, have not sufficient income to maintain a fair standard of living. Unemployment to be a first charge on industry and a State Unemployment Insurance Fund obtained by assessments on industry in a similar manner to that adopted with Provincial Compensation Funds. Unemployment insurance to be administered by the Federal Government.

f) Raw materials obtainable in Canada should be exported in their highest manufactured form.

<sup>48</sup> Private employment agencies are now abolished by law in Nova Scotia and throughout the western provinces. B. M. Stewart, *Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science* (May, 1923).

Other suggestions advocate the release of raw materials held out of use by speculative interests, scientific and industrial research, and the development of the home market through placing more purchasing power in the hands of the workers.<sup>49</sup>

#### C. CANADIAN INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES INVESTIGATION ACT

*Orientation.*—The congress has consistently declared itself in favor of conciliation and arbitration, but has as regularly opposed the introduction of any element of compulsion as applied to the latter. As we have already indicated, considerable discussion was indulged in at the conventions of an earlier period as to the comparative merits of voluntary and compulsory arbitration, leading finally to the adoption of the former into the platform of principles of the congress. That the opinion of the majority has not changed is seen, not only in the retention of this plank down to the present, but also in the vigorous protest registered in 1910 against an attempt from other quarters to introduce a measure for compulsory arbitration into the Dominion Parliament.<sup>50</sup>

But the main expressions and activities of the congress in the last two decades with respect to these and kindred matters have centered around the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act. This act, which received the royal assent in the spring of 1907, was not an offspring of the labor movement, but was a government measure designed to protect the public interest through

<sup>49</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 9-10. In labor's petition to the government in 1926 for constructive dealing with the unemployment problem, the chief characteristic is the emphasis upon centralized public responsibility. Not only does it call for the creation of a "federal fund" to be administered in collaboration with the Employment Service of Canada and distributed to unemployed and underemployed workers, but it would also prohibit any employer from discharging any considerable number of workmen without due notice to the Employment Service. Furthermore, it advocates giving power to the advisory councils of the Employment Service for dealing with matters relating to the co-ordinating of public-works projects. See *Canadian Congressional Journal* (April, 1926), p. 12.

<sup>50</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 15.

preventing any precipitate dislocation in the operations of industries of a public-utility character, this term being used in the first instance to cover such industries as coal mining, transportation, street railways, the telegraph, and telephone. To this end it required that any dispute arising in this class of industries should be submitted to a Board of Conciliation and Investigation, which, upon the application of either party, should be constituted, if the case was deemed worthy, by the Minister of Labor within fifteen days after the date of application. A stipulated period was also provided, during which such a board was carrying on its investigation, when stoppage of work was illegal. An employer who brought about a lockout contrary to its provisions became liable to a fine of not more than \$1,000 nor less than \$100 for each day that such lockout existed, while an employee who went on strike contrary to its provisions became liable to a fine of not less than \$10 nor more than \$50 for each day. Employers and employees must give at least thirty days' notice of an intended change affecting the conditions of employment with respect to wages and hours, and, pending the proceedings before a board, the relations of the parties to the dispute should remain unchanged. As stated in the *Labor Gazette* at the time, the government did not contemplate instituting proceedings when any of the provisions of the act were violated, but any individual might lay the information necessary to such proceedings as in the case of any other infringement of the law under the criminal code.<sup>51</sup> The act specified, furthermore, that the awards of the boards should be made known to the Canadian public through the columns of the *Labor Gazette*. While providing thus for the application of the principles of mediation, conciliation, compulsory investigation, and publicity in the industries named, the new measure also made provision for voluntary arbitration. Section 62 provided that if the parties agreed to be bound by the award or recommendation of the board, then such award or rec-

<sup>51</sup> *Labor Gazette*, VII, 1112.

ommendation might be made a rule of a court of record and be treated as an award of a court of arbitration. It was also provided that in the event of both parties being agreed, applications for boards under the statute would be entertained from industries other than public utilities.

The attitude of the congress toward this act has changed from critical indorsement to complete condemnation and back again to its first position; based, however, this time upon a more intelligent appreciation of its limitations and its possibilities.

The first formal expression of opinion occurred at the 1907 convention, in a resolution introduced by a delegate of the Brotherhood of Maintenance-of-Way Employees. It ran as follows:

Whereas organized labor has from time to time expressed its disapproval of strikes except as a last resort in industrial disputes, and, whereas, particularly in disputes in connection with public utilities the public have rights that must be respected and considered; and whereas the Lemieux Bill is designed to avoid strikes and lockouts in connection with industrial disputes in certain public utilities until such time as the merits of the dispute are publicly investigated; and, whereas, organized labor always courts investigation of its grievances by reason of the justice of its claims and its desire to be fair: Resolved, that this Trades and Labor Congress of Canada hereby express its approval of the principle of the Lemieux Bill as being in consonance with the oft-expressed attitude of organized labor in favor of investigation and conciliation.

This motion was cause for a debate that lasted for three hours, at the end of which a standing vote was taken which gave eighty-one in favor of the principle of the act and nineteen against.<sup>52</sup>

With the accumulation of experience, the dissatisfaction indicated by the active minority in the foregoing vote was destined to increase. At the 1908 convention the miners were loud in their demands for changes; and one of the delegates representing a union of mechanics in the Canadian Pacific Railway car

<sup>52</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-third Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 55.

shops suggested amendments calculated to meet certain features in the act as brought out by the Canadian Pacific Railway strike negotiations of that year.<sup>53</sup> The executive council, through its solicitor, prepared a draft bill of amendments and had it introduced in the House of Commons during the session of 1908-9, seeking as its chief objects: better payment of members of the board, prevention of delays, and a more effective rendering of section 57 for the purpose of enforcing the continuance of the former relations between employees and employed during the required period of notice and while the board is carrying on its investigation.<sup>54</sup> In 1910 the report stated that the amendments had been passed and the act was working fairly satisfactorily.<sup>55</sup>

A change of mind was evident in the 1911 convention, as was indicated by a unanimous vote in favor of the following resolution,<sup>56</sup> which grew out of lengthy discussion of other proposals and a report by a special committee: "While this Congress still believes in the principle of investigation and conciliation, and while recognizing that benefits have accrued at times to various bodies of workmen under the operation of the Lemieux Act, yet in view of decisions and rulings and delays . . . : Be it resolved that this Congress ask for the repeal of the act."

At the 1912 session, when this motion was reaffirmed, Sir George Askwith, commissioner of the British Industrial Council, was on the platform, and the convention, in anticipation of his report to that body, sent a warning to British labor in the fol-

<sup>53</sup> In this case the company had declared a reduction of wages, following which the men struck and later applied for a board.

<sup>54</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 12, 55.

<sup>55</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 13, 15. It should be noted here that the initial force in procuring the amendments of 1910 came from the railway brotherhoods rather than from the congress. Cf. *Labor Gazette*, X, 1271 ff., 1398 ff.

<sup>56</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 15.

lowing words: "It is possible that those who are interested in the Lemieux Act in Canada from the employing interests standpoint may paint the legislation in roseate hues to the investigator. But the workers of this Dominion would be untrue to their class if they did not reveal the defects of any legislation that became a hindrance in many cases due to administrative delays, etc."

Continuing, the message declared that nothing had happened to change their opinion during the year, and they recommended to the British Labor party that they "fight to the last ditch against any infringement of the right to strike when they please, however wrapped up the infringement is in honeyed legislative phraseology."<sup>57</sup>

A study of the reports of the conventions during this period up to 1917 reveals important differences of opinion among different elements within the congress with respect to the act. The miners said it favored the employers, and sought its repeal; the railway bodies fluctuated considerably, but in the earlier years, in particular, were more favorable; the Order of Railroad Telegraphers indorsed it, seeking its extension, and, on account of the congress' continued stand against it, severed their connection; in general the East favored it while the West condemned.<sup>58</sup> Meanwhile the executive, in its interviews with the Dominion ministers, while faithfully presenting the resolutions of the congress, talked more in terms of amendments than of repeal. But another session of parliament passed, and then another, and nothing was done. The Minister of Labor stated in 1915 that he had prepared a bill of amendments, but in view of the diverse suggestions coming to him from different classes of working peo-

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>58</sup> It should be noted that the Canadian Federation of Labor consistently indorsed the act, and recommended its extension to trades not covered (see *Labor Gazette*, XIV, 446); also that among the miners of the Provincial Workmen's Association of Nova Scotia, unlike the United Mine Workers of America and the Western Federation of Miners, gave it approval; also that the older railway brotherhoods gave it their support.

ple he thought it unwise to bring it before the House at that time.<sup>59</sup> The various clauses of this measure he presented to the convention. Not finding them satisfactory, the convention instructed the executive to have the solicitor draft a measure to carry out its own wishes. This was done and the result was brought before the 1916 convention.

Some of the charges against the act as it stood, as voiced by the delegates participating in the discussions, were the following: (1) that it interfered with labor's most effective weapon, the right to strike; (2) that in requiring a lengthy delay after notice of change in working conditions was given, and during the investigation by a board, it operated to the disadvantage of the men; (3) that it contained no provisions to make an employer prove that in laying off workers for the avowed purpose of stock-taking this was the true cause of his action; (4) that it was subject to court interference; (5) that the provision requiring that an application for a board must be accompanied by a statutory declaration stating that "to the best knowledge and belief of the declarant a lockout or a strike . . . will be declared and that the necessary authority to declare such strike or lockout has been obtained," worked an unfairness to the workers, inasmuch as it necessitated the taking of a vote of the membership, a process that in such cases as railway workers, in particular, was costly and unsatisfactory; (6) that there was an element of unfairness in apportioning fines for the violation of the act on a per capita basis against the men, whereas fines against the employers were fixed in a lump sum; that in those cases where the number of workers was large, their's was much the heavier penalty; (7) that a board is never granted to a weak organization; (8) that it made no provision for interpretation of an award in case doubts or unforeseen circumstances should arise; (9) that it was bound

<sup>59</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-first Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 60.

to operate contrary to the interests of the men when used by a capitalistic government.

Solicitor O'Donoghue, in presenting his proposed bill to the 1916 convention, explained in detail how the various provisions were calculated to remedy these evils. But by this time the temper of the majority had been aroused against the act and a few long-standing members of the executive council were almost the only ones who had a word to offer in its defense. The convention went on record in a resolution presented by two delegates of the United Mine Workers "as opposing the Lemieux Act in its entirety."<sup>60</sup>

This vigorous denunciation is to be explained by a number of factors. In the first place the government, in the face of a growing criticism, had failed to make any real advance toward amending the act, but had contented itself with explaining the difficulties in the way of any satisfactory change. In the second place, instead of meeting the wishes of the congress by appointing a fair-wages board to determine the rates of wages and conditions of work undertaken in the manufacture of war supplies for the Dominion and imperial governments, the Dominion government had rather arbitrarily issued "as an alternative" an order-in-council extending the application of the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act to permit of a board being established to decide in each case where a dispute might arise.<sup>61</sup> Labor was deeply incensed, for it could not tolerate automatic extension of the act. In the third place, recent applications for boards by employees had been refused because of what the workers regarded as purely technical reasons.<sup>62</sup> Finally, in the fourth place, it

<sup>60</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-second Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 132.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>62</sup> The most notable instance of this kind, and one which colored the whole thinking of the 1916 convention, was the refusal to the miners of Thetford, Que-

should be remembered that 1915 and 1916 marked the early stage of the rising price period, and consequently it devolved upon the workers to apply for boards in order to get wage increases and to assume the burden of showing cause for such changes. It should also be noted that by the latter year the labor supply was becoming scarce and the possibilities seen in the strike weapon were correspondingly greater.

At the close of the war we find the executive council at the Quebec convention (1918) declaring, in a statement later adopted by the meeting, that, in spite of the action taken at Toronto two years earlier, labor organizations were using the act more than before; that a large number of settlements had been made, and in many cases these had been arranged satisfactorily to the workers; that amendments, recently accomplished by the Minister, had made the act more popular.<sup>63</sup> In 1919 we find not only the sentiments of the previous year reaffirmed, but also the inauguration of a movement toward the extension of the jurisdiction of the act.<sup>64</sup>

Embodying both the 1919 resolution on the matter and a resolution passed at the 1920 convention, the legislative requests with respect to the act as presented to the ministry at Ottawa in February, 1921, were as follows: "(a) Amendments so as to make the Act applicable to any industry upon the ap-

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bec, where in addition to being denied a board, the applicants were reminded that it was illegal for them to strike.

<sup>63</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-fourth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 35, 118. The amendments referred to covered the following points: (1) Enabling application for a board to be made within 30 days after a strike or a lockout, thus affirming a point in controversy that a striker is still an employee. (2) Reducing the time limit for the appointment of a board. (3) Declaring freedom from court restraining orders. (4) Providing for better publication of awards. (5) Providing for initiatory action by the Minister of Labor in cases where he becomes aware of industrial trouble brewing with neither party inclined to make application. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>64</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-fifth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 187.

plication of either an organization involved or an employer, provided that the compulsory clauses restraining action pending the decision of the boards is eliminated. (b) Extending the Act so as to apply to policemen, firemen, and other civic employees and to all industries mentioned in the Act, whether privately or publicly owned."<sup>65</sup>

Certain features in the activities of the congress with respect to the Industrial Disputes Act in recent years reflect the conditions of declining prices and a bearish labor market. The employers are more often the offenders under its provisions, consequently proposals by the congress for the elimination of penalties are lacking. On the other hand there are complaints of illegal wage reductions. Thus a resolution was introduced at the 1922 convention by the London Street Railway Employees, charging the company with violating clause 57 by reducing wages to employees after there was a dispute, and since there was no penalty attached to that section; therefore resolved "that the executive be asked to have the clause amended imposing a penalty on companies and corporations violating this section." A resolution to this effect was adopted by the convention.

As a result of the 1922 deliberations the executive submitted the following requests concerning the Industrial Disputes Act to the King government in January, 1923:

a) Revision of the Act, especially section 2, so as to more clearly define industries to which the Act applies.

b) Provision, to be included in section 58 of the Act, for penalties on companies or corporations violating section 57, and that the penalty imposed upon employers for violation of the Act be increased in proportion to the number of employees involved.

c) Amendments making it compulsory upon the parties seeking the change in wages or conditions to make application for a board, in case an agreement is not reached, before any such change can legally take effect.

<sup>65</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 23. The reply of the government was unfavorable to both of these requests, its reason for refusing the latter being that such extension would interfere with provincial jurisdiction. See *ibid.*, p. 26; also labor's rejoinder, p. 32.

*d*) Amendments to subsection 2*b* of section 15 so as to make possible the establishment of a board upon the simple declaration of failure to reach an agreement by direct negotiation.<sup>66</sup>

Subsequently a bill covering *c* and *d* and the first part *b* of the foregoing program was carried unanimously in the House of Commons but was rejected by the Senate.<sup>67</sup>

An examination in juxtaposition of the resolutions of the different conventions of the congress with respect to this piece of legislation over a period of sixteen years leads to several general observations. In the first place the subject has been discussed more or less prominently by every convention since 1907. Secondly, there is visible a rather striking correspondence between the deliberations and requests of the first three years of the operation of the act and those since 1920, whereas the attitudes expressed in the intervening period stand in contrast. Probably the chief explanation of this is that in periods of dropping prices most of the applications are for hearings against threatened decreases of wages, or against employers who have changed the working conditions, or put reductions into effect in direct violation of the provisions of the act; whereas under conditions of industrial prosperity and rising prices it is the workers who are seeking to make the changes. Another factor that calls for mention in explanation of this phenomenon, and one which, judging from the tone of the deliberations at different periods, is of some weight, is that of change in the government and the personnel responsible for the administration of the act.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>66</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 11.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>68</sup> The Liberal government, whose creation the act was, went out of power in 1911 and was returned again in 1921. Three years prior to the latter date, however, a change was made in the Conservative cabinet which brought in as Minister of Labor a well-known trade unionist in the person of Senator G. D. Robertson, and thereby made the administration of the act more palatable to organized labor. The precedent was followed in the selection of the Liberal Ministry in 1921.

In the third place it is the compulsory and penalizing features of the act that have given most offense. The loss of the right to strike has been emphasized as a great deprivation, especially in times of industrial prosperity; and the penalty provisions have been condemned, at one time for their unfairness in bearing too heavily upon labor, at another for their impotence in effecting any restraint upon the employer. In general the congress has failed to understand the intention of the government with respect to the latter's responsibilities in prosecuting offenders. As late as 1922 we find the executive council remarking upon the failure of the government to undertake to enforce the penalty clauses by legal action, though a few convictions had been secured in actions brought by private parties.<sup>69</sup>

Finally, in the fourth place, applications under the act coming from labor organizations have increased during recent years, and there is a distinct tendency to call for the extension of its jurisdiction to industries heretofore uncovered.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 218 for government's non-assumption of such responsibilities.

<sup>70</sup> Act declared unconstitutional, 1925: Since this analysis was made, the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act has been found *ultra vires* of the Dominion Parliament by the Privy Council. This decision, as handed down in January, 1925, states that under the British North America Act the provincial parliaments have exclusive jurisdiction over municipal institutions, and also local works and undertakings, excepting those extending beyond the limits of the provinces or those declared by the Parliament of Canada to be for the general advantage of Canada or for the advantage of two or more provinces.

Immediately following this judgment the congress took its stand against the loss of the federal government's assistance, and against labor's dependence upon provincial legislation for the machinery for settling industrial disputes. It demanded of the Dominion government that it secure, by amendments to the British North America Act, if necessary, power to enable it to apply fully the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act throughout Canada, provided the amendments previously sought by labor were enacted. The legislation which followed in Parliament reinstated the measure on the statute books with such limitations regarding provincial jurisdiction as were called for by the Privy Council's decision, and the desired amendments were incorporated in the statute. Under section 2A: This latest amendment of the Act attempts to define and largely to list the industries and undertakings which shall be deemed to come within the legislative authority of the Dominion Parliament and hence

## D. LABOR AND THE LAW IN CANADA

The purpose of this section is to examine the attitude of organized labor in Canada toward the law. Before dealing specifically with the activities of the congress in its championship of labor in legal matters, it is necessary to give some picture of the status of labor before the law in Canada at the beginning of the century.

*i) Labor law prior to 1900.*—Legislation for the peace, order, and good government of Canada and for the regulation of trade and commerce is matter for the federal parliament. Since the criminal law comes within the same authority, the federal government is required to take cognizance of such matters as conspiracy, violence, and intimidation. It must be remembered, too, that English common law applies to Canada. At the time of the arrest of the Toronto printers back in the seventies, the laborers, and in fact the populace in general, were awakened to the realization that the British statutes of 1857 and 1871 had no application in Canada, but that trade unions in the Dominion stood with respect to the law under the terms of the old English law of 1792. Such was the opinion of Judge Harrison as expressed in his statement prepared at that time for the master-printers. To quote, he found as follows:

That the law of Canada as regards labor combinations is the same as the Common Law of England, before the passing of the English statutes, 5 Geo. IV, Cap. 95, 8 Geo. IV, Cap. 96, and 22 Victoria, Cap. 23, none of which are in force in this country.

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within the scope of the Act. For the present the demands of labor in this direction have been substantially met (see *Report of the Proceedings of the Forty-first Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 18, 24, 52).

In its representations to Parliament in January, 1926, labor again urged the necessity of amendments to the British North America Act, not only "to foster national unity by giving greater powers to the federal government to deal with social and labor legislation," but also to establish the Supreme Court of Canada as the highest court of appeal (*Canadian Congress Journal* [April, 1926], p. 11).

None of these English protecting statutes . . . . being in force, I can only come to the conclusion that combinations of workmen in Canada for the following purposes are illegal: (1) to lessen or alter the hours of labor; (2) to obtain an advance in wages; (3) to fix the rate of wages; (4) to decrease the quantity of work; (5) to induce others to separate from their service before expiration of their time; (6) to quit work before the work is finished; (7) to refuse to enter into work or employment; (8) to persuade others not to enter into work or employment.<sup>71</sup>

That Canadian legislators were not aware of the true state of things is indicated by the passage of what was, in the light of this judgment, an unnecessary amendment of the Canadian criminal law in 1869. It was apparently copied from one passed, with more reason, somewhat earlier in Britain, and rendered liable to two years' imprisonment, "anyone who, in pursuance of any unlawful combination or conspiracy to raise the rate of wages or respecting any trade, business or manufacture, or any person employed therein, unlawfully assaults any person or uses any violence with intent to hinder such person from being employed at such trade, business or manufacture."<sup>72</sup>

It was sought to remedy this hapless condition of affairs in 1872 by providing, under the Trade Union Act, not only that trade-unions should be legal, but that they should be exempted from the law on unlawful acts in restraint of trade. An amendment to the criminal law passed in 1900 provided that nothing in the section on conspiracy in restraint of trade should be construed as applicable to combinations of workmen or employees for their own reasonable protection as such. Amendments of 1875, 1876, and 1890 relieved the repressive provision of 1869 with respect to conspiracy. As stated in its present form the re-

<sup>71</sup> Copied from J. McArthur O'Conner, *Trade Unions in Toronto*, chap. viii.

<sup>72</sup> *Legislative Yearbook*, published by Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council, 1923, p. 59. Cf. *Labor Legislation in Canada* (1920), p. 93, sec. 502.

sulting regulation stipulates that no prosecution is capable of being maintained against any person for conspiracy not to work with or for any employer or workmen, or for doing any act which has for its purpose the formation of a trade combination unless such act is otherwise punishable by statute.<sup>73</sup>

Not so happy from labor's point of view has been the story with respect to picketing. Here Canada appears to have copied the motherland rather assiduously in the way of repressive measures, but has failed to follow in the matter of liberalizing the code. Quoting again the review already drawn upon, we read

An amendment of 1872 made it unlawful for anyone wrongfully and without lawful authority, with a view to compelling any other person to abstain from doing anything which he has a lawful right to do, or to abstain from doing anything from which he has a lawful right to abstain, to use personal violence or threats of violence, to follow persistently such person from place to place or to follow him in a disorderly manner with one or more persons, or to hide his tools or other property, or to beset or watch the residence or place of business of such person.

The British Act of 1871 from which the Canadian law was copied, was replaced in 1875 by an act which reproduced this section with the addition of a clause which provided that attending at or near a house or place of business merely to obtain or communicate information should not be deemed to be watching and besetting within the meaning of the Act. A similar provision was made by a Canadian enactment of 1876, but was omitted from the Criminal Code when it was consolidated in 1892.<sup>74</sup>

This omission, in the face of protests of labor at the time, has been the cause of much ruffling of the waters. The reason given for not incorporating it in the new code was that it was unnecessary, inasmuch as peaceful picketing was not declared illegal in the Trade Unions Act.<sup>75</sup>

A third aspect of criminal law development, of interest in the

<sup>73</sup> *Legislative Yearbook*, published by Winnipeg Trades Council, 1923, p. 60.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>75</sup> *Canadian Congress Journal* (February, 1924), p. 40.

present analysis, has to do with the breaking of contracts where such action may involve the destruction or injury of life or property. A section was enacted in 1877 which still stands as section No. 499 of the Criminal Code, rendering liable to a maximum penalty of \$100 or three months imprisonment everyone who wilfully breaks a contract, knowing or having reasonable cause to believe the consequences will be to endanger human life or cause serious bodily injury, or expose valuable property to destruction or serious injury; or who breaks a contract with any municipal corporation or authority or any company where he has reason to believe that the result of such action will be to cut off the supply of power, light, gas, or water; or who breaks any contract with a railway company where he should know that the probable consequences of his so doing will be to delay or prevent the running of any locomotive engine, or tender, or freight or passenger train.<sup>76</sup>

ii) *Activities of the congress with respect to the law.*—The foregoing brief review will serve as a setting for a study of the activities of the congress with respect to the law during the past twenty years. In the report of the executive council in 1903 it is brought out that the parliamentary representative had been grappling with an attempt by the Senate to enact the so-called B  ique bill, which had for its purpose, in addition to treating intimidating pickets as lawbreakers, to declare any group of more than three persons associated in any favorable relation with such pickets as “an unlawful assembly,” and making every member of such body punishable, “even though such person has not participated in such act or threat.”<sup>77</sup>

At the parliamentary session 1903–4 the Congress asked for amendments to the Criminal Code to guarantee to union men

<sup>76</sup> *Labor Legislation in Canada* (1920), p. 93. Cf. also *Legislative Yearbook*, Trades and Labor Council of Winnipeg, 1923, p. 59.

<sup>77</sup> *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 18.

arrested for picketing and kindred offenses the right to trial by jury.<sup>78</sup> In this it met with success, and the accomplishment was pronounced a distinct gain to labor.<sup>79</sup> Nevertheless juries do not seem to have been proof against the current doctrines of the time, as is evidenced by the decision against the Rossland Miners' Union, Rossland, British Columbia, reported to the 1904 convention. In this case action had been brought against the union for damages sustained in a strike which took place in 1901, and the court gave a verdict in favor of the plaintiff to the tune of \$12,500. "The jury," remarked President Fleet, in his report to the congress, "found that the union entered into a conspiracy to prevent men working in the company's mine."<sup>80</sup> It is interesting to note that the convention at this time was following closely the battle of the British unions against the Taff Vale decision, which apparently had served as precedent for this judgment.<sup>81</sup>

The outstanding note, however, of the early deliberations of the present century is the confusion as to the law which possessed the mind of organized labor. This probably finds its best expression in the report of the executive officers to the 1905 convention. We quote it at some length, where, under the heading "Labor Laws," it reads as follows:

Notwithstanding all the litigation during the past few years dealing with the rights and duties of labor and capital it is impossible for anyone, layman or lawyer, to say with any degree of definiteness what the law is upon these relations. The time is undoubtedly opportune to ask the Dominion Government, and the various provincial governments, so far as their re-

<sup>78</sup> *Labor Gazette*, VI, 429.

<sup>79</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 48.

<sup>80</sup> *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 10.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15. The British Columbia Legislature, however, passed an act shortly after to relieve unions in that province from the effects of the Taff Vale decision (see Statutes of B.C. 1902 c. 66). Cf. also *Labor Legislation in Canada* (1920), p. 761.

spective jurisdictions extend, to pass laws stating clearly and unequivocally the rights and duties of all parties concerned. We assume that we have the right to strike and to bring pressure upon our enemies to recognize our claims. We prate a lot about the right of free speech, but this right does not at times seem to include the right to peaceably persuade the public to give their patronage to others than those who oppose our just claims; and we find ourselves denied the right to inform workmen of the existence of a strike, or of the reasons for the cessation of work; and finally when we surmount all these difficulties we are confronted with that bogey known as conspiracy which is ever present, all-inclusive, and whose confines are beyond mortal ken. Organized labor desires to observe the law, but that observance is impossible where no one can say what the law is.<sup>82</sup>

With many of the decisions running adversely, labor began, shortly after the passage in 1906 of the British Industrial Disputes Act in England, to look for relief to the Privy Council, hoping that by the reversal of some of the Canadian decisions the law in Canada would be clarified and brought more in accordance with that of Britain. A test was made in 1907-8 when the case between the Metallic Roofing Company of Toronto and Local No. 30 of the Sheet Metal Workers' Union was carried to the high court of the empire largely on funds subscribed by member unions of the Canada Trades and Labor Congress.<sup>83</sup> The first clause in the complaint alleged, among other items, that the union by its interference had caused otherwise satisfied workmen to leave off work at midday. There was also involved a charge of boycotting. The plaintiff had been awarded damages in the lower court and the judgment had been twice sustained on appeal when the case was carried from the Canadian jurisdiction and the appellants rewarded with a reversal and an order for a new trial.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>82</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 16.

<sup>83</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-third Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 28.

<sup>84</sup> The differences were subsequently settled outside of court (cf. R. H. Coats, *Canada and Its Provinces*), Vol. IX.

Encouraged by this success, it was decided to repeat the experiment two years later and the congress once more gave its services in procuring financial support. This time, although the question of union men causing others to commit breach of contract was again involved, organized labor was especially interested in getting a pronouncement in favor of the legality of peaceful picketing. The case was one dating back to 1906 and involving Local Union No. 62 of the United Association of Journeymen Plumbers, Gas Fitters and Steam-Fitters Helpers, and the Master-Plumbers of Winnipeg. The union, having been defeated in the lower court and enjoined from pursuing its former methods of making its strike effective, made appeal. In March, 1909, Judge Perdue, of the Manitoba Court of Appeals, reaffirmed the earlier decisions, made the injunction perpetual against picketing the premises of Cotter Brothers, master-plumbers and awarded \$2,000 damages.<sup>85</sup> In his statement he declared it to be unlawful for a number of persons to combine together to induce others to break contracts, and if such others are so induced it constitutes an actionable wrong; that picketing or besetting of the plaintiff's shops with the object of coercing employees or inducing them to cease work is unlawful; also that the union's funds and property were liable to answer in damages.<sup>86</sup> It was from this judgment that labor took its appeal to England. Unfortunately, however, on account of delay in making the necessary application, the case failed to get before the Privy Council, and labor was left, as the chronicler in the *Ga-*

<sup>85</sup> *Labor Gazette*, IX, 1155.

<sup>86</sup> The last clause furnished an interesting sequel. The plaintiff, failing to collect upon the property, obtained from the court the appointment of a receiver and the union members were ordered to hand over their monthly dues in satisfaction of the damage claim to a representative of the court. The dues not being paid, a further action was instituted to force their payment, but the Court of King's Bench found, after examining the constitution of the union, that no contract existed whereby any member had agreed to pay such dues to the union, and hence the receiver could not recover (*Labor Gazette*, X, 401; XI, 520).

*zette* remarked at the time, to suffer from the disabilities of the Taff Vale decision.<sup>87</sup>

About the same time the Trades and Labor Congress, acting through its parliamentary representative, Mr. O'Donoghue, applied to the then Minister of Justice, Honorable A. B. Aylesworth, to reinsert in the Criminal Code that section which had been left out in 1892 and which formerly safeguarded the right of peaceful picketing and gave Canadian workers the same protection, under the law, as that enjoyed by British workers. Mr. Aylesworth, however, replied (June, 1910) to the effect that such an amendment would be merely an addition of unnecessary verbiage, since, under the law, it is the intent with which the act complained of has been done, which is the "essential ingredient necessary to be established to constitute the offense," and "if such intent is absent, and the besetting or watching . . . is merely to obtain or communicate information," there would be no offense under the Act. Thus both in its legislative approach and in its attempt to obtain a favorable legal precedent labor was defeated in its endeavor to bring picketing within the approval of the law.

It is not to be inferred from the foregoing that picketing at this time was always declared illegal. In the majority of cases it was, but in such decisions there was generally some finding of intimidation or other effective cause. An example to the contrary was afforded by an Ontario court in the case of *Rex v. Brantford Moulders*, where it was held that picketing was not illegal provided the men did not beset the works with a view to compelling others to abstain from doing lawful work.<sup>88</sup>

Beginning with 1917, the congress turned once more to the Dominion government to secure legislation to relieve the workers from what was felt to be the increasing harshness of the court

<sup>87</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XI, 1171.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, 94.

decisions. Again the subject of picketing, along with the free use of the injunction, was to be the storm center. The occasion seems to have been the institution of heavy damage suits by several Winnipeg and Montreal employers and the issuance of injunctions (in some cases, in perpetuity) by the courts. In the former city especially, where the Mather decisions were operative, feeling ran high, and it was declared that there was no weapon possessed by organized labor that could successfully cope with the "power of this judge-made law" which affected so prejudicially the interests of the workers. President Watters, in a series of interviews and letters with the Prime Minister and Minister of Labor, urged either the amendment of the clauses on picketing (thereby legalizing peaceful persuasion) or the passage of an act respecting trades unions and trades disputes patterned after the British Act of 1906 but adapted to Canadian conditions. Premier Borden evidently preferred the former alternative. He referred the whole matter to the Minister of Justice for his consideration, and at the time nothing came of it.<sup>90</sup>

The radical propaganda and the unrest at the close of the war which finally came to a head in the Winnipeg strike gave occasion for changes in the Criminal Code both by addition and subtraction—changes which for a time deflected the attention of labor from the subject of picketing. Following two Orders-in-Council in 1918, a measure was passed through the Dominion Parliament (in face of opposition from both the Trades and Labor Congress executive and the committees of the railway brotherhoods) substantially incorporating these Orders into permanent effectiveness by amendments to the Code. These amendments have to do with sedition, seditious conspiracy, and unlawful association. More specifically, Section 133 of the old Code, declaring that no one should be held guilty of seditious intention when he only intended in good faith to show that the government

<sup>90</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-third Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 102-7, 176.

had been misled or mistaken in a certain course of action, or to point out errors or defects in the government or constitution, or to call attention to matters which have a tendency to produce feelings of hatred and ill-will between different classes, was struck out. Two new sections were added. The first of these (97 b.) reads as follows:

Any person who prints, publishes, edits, issues, circulates, sells, or offers for sale or distribution any book, newspaper, periodical, pamphlet, picture, circular, card, letter, writing, tract, publication or document of any kind, in which is taught, advocated, advised or defended; or who shall in any manner teach, advocate, or advise or defend the use, without authority of law, of force, violence, terrorism, or physical injury to person or property, or threat of such injury, as a means of accomplishing any governmental, industrial or economic change, or otherwise, shall be guilty of an offence and liable to imprisonment for not more than twenty years.

The other new section had to do with the extension of the content of the term "unlawful association." It ran as follows:

Any association, organization, society or corporation, whose professed purpose or one of whose purposes is to bring about any governmental, industrial or economic change within Canada by the use of force, violence or physical injury to person or property, or by threats of such injury, or which teaches, advocates, advises or defends the use of force, violence, terrorism or physical injury to person or property, or threats of such injury, in order to accomplish such change, or for any other purpose, or which shall by any means prosecute or pursue such purpose or professed purpose, or shall so teach, advocate, advise or defend, shall be an unlawful association.

The section continues by providing for the seizure of property of unlawful associations and for prosecuting their officers and members, and names penalties for those wearing their badges, etc.<sup>91</sup>

At this time also the question of the legality of the sympathetic strike came to the fore and provided an additional item of concern for organized labor.

<sup>91</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-sixth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 132 ff. Cf. also *Proceedings of the Thirty-fifth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 28, 156.

Following the events of 1919, the congress began for the first time to make the reform of the Criminal Code one of its chief objectives in its representations to the federal government; and since that time the effort in this direction has been well advised and co-ordinated. During the summer of 1920 the executive procured the services of J. G. O'Donoghue, a life-long student of the law in relation to labor, to write a review of the whole situation as it existed at the time in Canada. This report, under the date of September 7, 1920, was submitted in detail to the convention held at Windsor, Ontario, a few days later. It dealt at length with the subject of picketing, both in its civil and criminal law aspects, and set out in a table of "instructions to pickets" what, in the opinion of the writer, could be and what could not be done under the Canadian law. Under the captions "sedition" and "conspiracy" it presented to the workers the changes that had recently been wrought in the Code by the amendments referred to previously, and pointed out their significance from the labor point of view. Special attention was called to the dangerous possibilities involved in the free use of the words "force" and "terrorism" as methods of "industrial and economic change," which these amendments put under the ban, and prescribed heavy punishments for persons and organizations using or advocating them. It was the contention of Mr. O'Donoghue that these terms were too ambiguous and included too much. As likely to be interpreted by the courts, their possibilities of inclusiveness would practically make striking of any kind illegal. The report also sought to educate the workers with respect to the criminal law on the breaking of contracts in particular industries and the legal status of the sympathetic strike.<sup>92</sup>

On the basis of this learned opinion and the remedies suggested the congress framed its demands in its approaches to the government during the next four years. The ideal sought was to

<sup>92</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-sixth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 132-42.

obtain for the Canadian worker the same rights with respect to these matters that are enjoyed by his brothers in Britain. Thus in 1921 this section of its legislative program named the following as its first four points:

a) Repeal of the section referring to sedition, seditious intention, seditious libel and seditious conspiracy.

b) The reinsertion into the Criminal Code of the sections establishing the right of peaceful picketing.

c) Reconsideration of amendments passed during the panicky session of Parliament, 1919, especially the elimination of the words "force," "terrorism," and "industrial or economic change," as mentioned in 97b and other sections.

d) Amendments to define sympathetic strikes and bring Canadian law into harmony with British law on this matter.<sup>93</sup>

In spite of the negative reply of the government through the Department of Justice, which argued conservatively on all four points, the congress declared its confidence in the righteousness of its own position and continued to press for practically the same objectives in subsequent years.<sup>94</sup>

With the increased use of injunctions in connection with picketing, the question of picketing re-established itself as the subject of first importance, and an additional clause was added to the program demanding the prevention of misuse of the power of injunctions in labor disputes.<sup>95</sup> It has been asserted that the conservative stand of the Department of Justice has been in some degree responsible for the free use by the courts of injunctions against picketing. At the convention of 1923 plans were considered for recurring again to the method of an earlier period, viz., by supporting an appeal to the Privy Council, the decision

<sup>93</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 23.

<sup>94</sup> For memorandum of Department of Justice and the rejoinder of the executive council of the Congress, see *ibid.*, pp. 28-34.

<sup>95</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 11.

in point being that of Chief Justice Martin of the Montreal Superior Court assessing damages against the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union with a permanent injunction against their further picketing of any kind or interfering with the employees or prospective employees of Dame Hannah Bercovitch.<sup>96</sup> Previous to this a test was made of obtaining redress by way of provincial legislation, a bill to legalize peaceful picketing being brought before the Manitoba house by a labor member, only to suffer defeat.<sup>97</sup>

That confusion was still rife in regard to the legal status of picketing is evidenced by two contrasting decisions of 1924. An Alberta justice held that, lacking malice or injury to the plaintiff as their primary object, Calgary hotel employees were entitled to picket a city hotel to reduce the operator's business in order to compel compliance with the union's terms. An Ontario court, on the contrary, granted an injunction restraining men from picketing theaters where they had been employed, and later there was granted an enlargement to include other members of the union. Clarification was brought in some measure, however, in the case of *Renvers v. Rex*, where an attempt was made by the Supreme Court of Canada to define the terms "watching and besetting" as declared to be within the law in the provisions of section 501 (f) of the Criminal Code. Here the statement of Justice Newcombe in giving the majority decision declared that it was necessary to establish in one way or another that the watching and besetting was done wrongfully and without legal authority; that the picketing must be of such a nature as to constitute a nuisance before such picketers could be found against; that legal picketing is possible as for instance in the case of men lying around for a time after discharge and even being joined by others, provided they do not annoy or molest. But large numbers shouting in the

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100. Cf. also *Canadian Congress Journal* (June, 1923), p. 228.

<sup>97</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 63.

neighborhood, insistence on persuading, etc., are evidence of nuisance.<sup>98</sup>

A decision of May 10, 1926, as handed down by the Supreme Court of British Columbia, held that picketing must confine itself to communication of *facts* and the persuasion must be fair and reasonable. Declarations by pickets or on handbills that an employer is "unfair" is not dealing with a fact, but an opinion about which people may differ.<sup>99</sup> As the matter stands today, therefore, Canadian labor, when compared with that of Britain, is still in an uncomfortable and poorly defined position with respect to making an effective use of the strike. So far as express legislation is concerned it also lacks such protection as is afforded to the American worker by the clauses forbidding the enjoining of peaceful persuasion and communication in Section 20 of the Clayton Act.<sup>100</sup> On the other hand the most recent trend of Canadian court decisions would seem to be somewhat more favorable than that south of the line.

In contrast to the National Catholic Union, the congress has continued in its attitude of opposition to incorporation of trade-unions. In 1920 the executive council referred to a campaign by the employers to pass legislation to make it compulsory upon all unions to become incorporated, and warning that all affiliates should use their best efforts to oppose such a measure.<sup>101</sup> Again in 1922, in connection with the discussion of an attempt to pass such a bill in the Quebec legislature, the congress went on record in a resolution that affiliated organizations should "resist all efforts to have their local unions, national or international unions

<sup>98</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XXVI, 618.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 624.

<sup>100</sup> Exception should perhaps be made to this statement in the case of British Columbia.

<sup>101</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-sixth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 70.

incorporated.<sup>102</sup> The disadvantage of incorporation in making the funds of the union available for the satisfaction of unfavorable court decisions has long been recognized, and few organizations have seen fit to incorporate or to use the machinery of registration as provided in 1872.<sup>103</sup> On the other hand, that certain disadvantages have resulted from remaining without legal personality is shown by a decision handed down by Judge Galt in a Manitoba court in 1923. In this case, which was brought by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers against a former secretary of its General Adjustment Committee for the Canadian National Railways for the recovery of certain funds alleged to have been wrongfully retained, the court declared the plaintiff nonsuited, holding it, as an unregistered trade-union and thus not covered by the Act of 1872, to be an organization grossly in restraint of trade on account of certain clauses of its constitution and ritual relating to strikes, and hence without the law for the purposes of legal proceedings. According to this judgment a trade-union that is not registered has no standing before the courts unless its objects are legal. On the other hand it was held that, if its hands are clean, it may approach the court in the capacity of a plaintiff and be allowed the service of the law.

Fortunately, however, for the cause of Canadian trade-unions, this court's adverse judgment upon the legality of the brotherhood was reversed on appeal to the Supreme Court of Manitoba, and the opinion of the appellate court sustained by the Supreme Court of Canada. For the latter Mr. Justice Duff declared that provincial and Dominion statutes for the past fifteen or twenty years have been directed to the encouragement of collective bargaining, and if collective bargaining is to be made effectual, unions must have rules giving authority to discipline

<sup>102</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 146.

<sup>103</sup> For recent evidence of the dangers to union funds through incorporation, see case of *Patzatek vs. Adams* (*Labor Gazette*, XXIV, 814, 908; XXV, 92).

recalcitrant members, and they must have funds and persons responsible to the membership for the expenditure of these funds. The position taken by the Manitoba Court and upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada was that the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers was not an organization so tainted with illegality that the court would not lend its assistance to recover moneys of the union unjustifiably held by the late treasurer.<sup>104</sup>

#### E. THE STRUGGLE FOR A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The subject of technical education was introduced at the convention of 1906 when the congress went on record as in favor of the establishment of industrial technical schools throughout the Dominion and instructed its executive to bring the matter before the federal government. Three years later we find a unanimous recommendation to the effect that the congress reaffirm declarations already made in favor of the immediate appointment by the government of a commission of technical education, and requesting the appointment upon it of a labor representative.<sup>105</sup> In this effort the congress executive worked in co-operation with the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, and with such good result that the commission soon became a reality, beginning its work in July, 1910. The new body, upon which Mr. James Simpson, of Toronto, was the representative of the congress, made a lengthy study both in Canada and abroad, its conclusions being published, after a considerable delay, in four volumes under the Department of Labor. Education being a matter for the provinces, the Minister of Labor forwarded a copy of these volumes to each of the provincial premiers requesting comment. The congress meanwhile grew impatient of the long inaction and demanded legislation along the lines recommended by the commission, viz., the appropriation of some three million dol-

<sup>104</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XXIV, 532.

<sup>105</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 82.

lars per year for a period of ten years to assist the various provinces to develop a system of industrial training and technical education. The government replied that the report of the commission had never been expected to be taken as a program of action for the federal parliament and insisted that the consent of the provincial premiers must be obtained before any project of assistance could be worked out. Forthwith the congress turned its attention (1916) to impressing upon the provincial governments the importance of this matter so essential to the preparation of the nation to enter into the much-heralded competition for markets that was to characterize the period immediately following the war. The federal government, however, on its part, turned a deaf ear to all arguments while the war lasted, declaring that funds must not be diverted from the successful prosecution of this main object. Finally, in 1919, the Dominion Education Act was passed, answering and yet disappointing the hopes of the congress. It provided for the appropriation of ten million dollars to be used to assist this work in the provinces over a period of as many years, stipulating, however, that the local legislatures should vote as much as each province received.<sup>106</sup> The activities of the congress since that date have been directed mainly toward agitation for increases in the appropriations.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Since 1923 a bureau of technical education has been administered under the Department of Labor (see cover, *Monthly Labor Gazette*).

<sup>107</sup> The need of adult education of a more cultural nature has not been lost sight of. A representative of the congress attended the second conference called the Workers' Educational Bureau of the International Federation of Trade Unions held in England in August, 1924, and much interest was taken in his report as published at length in the *Congress Journal*. At the 1925 convention several resolutions were passed urging closer co-operation by the congress with the Workers' Educational Association of Ontario and greater use of its facilities by the local trade unions (see *Report of Forty-first Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 39, 153).

## CHAPTER VII

### ACTIVITIES OF THE CONGRESS SINCE 1902

—*Continued*

#### II. LEGISLATIVE LOBBYING FURTHER CONSIDERED

##### F. PUBLIC OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

The fourth plank of its platform of principles places the congress on record as favoring the "public ownership and democratic management of all public utilities." A number of the services, however, which go to make up the group included in this term are operated within the smaller areas covered by the operations of the various trades and labor councils, and with these the congress has a minimum of direct relations. Such are city water-works, lighting, street railways, etc. As a matter of fact the greater part of the activities of the congress, to be classed under this head, have had to do with railways.

With respect to these an early convention went on record as favoring, not only public ownership, but also that form of administration which has since been adopted by the federal government.

A nucleus of government-owned railroads was already in existence in Canada long before this period began. The old Intercolonial, it will be recalled, had been built as a government project and largely for political reasons shortly after the consummation of political union among the provinces. For upward of a quarter of a century it was operated directly by the Department of Railways and Canals, and continually at a loss. At the convention of 1905 we find the congress going on record with a recommendation that its direction and management should be taken out of "the hands of political manipulation" and placed under a commission appointed by the government. A year later,

with the Railway Commission an accomplished fact, the congress began to call for the public control of the telephone business through placing it under the jurisdiction of the same body, control being conceived of as a step in the direction of ownership.<sup>1</sup> It is well to guard against the assumption that because the congress advocated these changes at this time it was a leading force in bringing them to pass. The points are advanced rather as indicating the attitude of organized labor toward such matters and to show that it was in the vanguard of the progressive citizenship of that day. We find the executive council remarking somewhat triumphantly in 1906 that public sentiment was catching up with labor in the demand for public ownership. By 1910, not only telephone companies, but also telegraph, express, and cable companies had all been brought for purposes of regulation under the jurisdiction of the Railway Commission.

In the pre-war period, moreover, there was a tendency at times to push the principle of public ownership beyond the bounds of the concept "public utilities." Thus in 1912 a resolution was passed requesting that the federal and provincial governments conserve all water powers and coal lands not then taken up by private corporations, and that all municipalities be asked to join the governments in bringing about the public ownership of these sources of wealth. The substance of this motion was shortly after brought before the Dominion government.<sup>2</sup>

As early as 1904 the congress was busy protesting against the policy of concessions to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company to promote its construction across the long stretches of the undeveloped West. Its voice was for making such a proj-

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 48. This Railway Commission, or, as it was generally called, the Board of Railway Commissioners of Canada, had wide regulative powers, not only over rates, but also over matters affecting public safety and convenience. It did not, however, manage or direct the government lines. For history, see L. J. McLean, in *Canada and Its Provinces*, X, 471.

<sup>2</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XIII, 649.

ect a government undertaking. As the policy of government assistance continued, its opinion did not change. Following up a resolution of the 1912 convention, a delegation to the Dominion government asked, in connection with a report of the company losing heavily on operating expenses, that the line should be operated under the regulations of the Railway Act and under the control of the Railway Commission; and further, that an investigation be made to see how the money was being spent, whether its grants received from the government were not being used largely to defeat the legitimate ends of the men who were striking against the company to secure the same working terms as given the employees of the other roads.<sup>3</sup>

With the war came the development of plans by the government for the taking over of the three systems of railways which today constitute the Canadian National system. Although the congress offered objection to the method of evaluation in 1917, it later gave its hearty indorsement to the whole project of nationalization and has since continued in that attitude. It has made the statement, however, that it cannot be satisfied until the Canadian Pacific is brought into the fold and the dangers from "capitalist marauders" are thus laid to rest.<sup>4</sup> The same convention (1918) advocated a government commission to investigate the matter of government ownership and control of aircraft to be used for commercial purposes.<sup>5</sup> Since 1918 its efforts have been directed largely toward securing representation for labor upon the Board of Railway Directors. Control by a group of men intimately connected with capitalist interests might be no guaranty of betterment to the workers, even though appointed by the government. Disappointed for a time, its de-

<sup>3</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XIII, 649; also *Proceedings of the Twenty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 47, 60, 82.

<sup>4</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-fourth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 34, 118.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

mand has at last been met. President Tom Moore was appointed to the new directorate, formed in 1923, controlling both the Canadian national railways and the Canadian merchant marine. Realizing that large sections of the workers most directly concerned with railway administration have no affiliation with the congress, Mr. Moore was somewhat dubious for a time about the wisdom of the government's choice, but accepted the office after receiving assurances of support from the railway labor organizations.<sup>6</sup>

#### G. POLICING OF STRIKES

The policing of strikes with the military has been, in Canada, as in other countries in recent years, a cause of much bitterness in industrial relations. Apart from the episode at Winnipeg in 1919, which we treat elsewhere in some detail, the chief use of soldiers has been in connection with disputes in the mining, steel, and transportation industries, and with strikes of the longshoremen.

The first serious consideration given to the matter by the congress was at the convention of 1906, when protests were registered against the operation of the Northwest Mounted Police at Lethbridge during a strike of the United Mine Workers in that area, and against the use of the militia in the course of a strike by the street car employees of Winnipeg, both events having occurred in the spring of that year. It is interesting to note, in view of recent suggested remedies, that a committee of the congress at that time recommended legislation to make it more difficult to call out the troops.<sup>7</sup> At its meeting with representatives of the Laurier government, following the convention,

<sup>6</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 36. For more recent statement of Canadian labor's support of the principle of public ownership, with labor representation in the administration, see *Proceedings of the Forty-first Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 40.

<sup>7</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 61, 63, 18, 44.

the executive council presented resolutions against such undesirable use of the soldiers in the future.<sup>8</sup> Three years later, at the Quebec convention, similar resolutions were passed against the sending of the militia to Glace Bay on the occasion of the miners' strike there, and also against "their stay protracted without justification." "Our protest," said the executive council relative to this matter, "is not to justify violence or unlawful interference with the rights of individuals or corporations; but it is a menace to the country that the Public Arm should be so easily invoked on behalf of a private corporation for no other purpose, we believe, than to mislead public opinion, and for the purpose of intimidation."<sup>9</sup> It recommended the appointment of a royal commission to investigate the calling out of the soldiers, their conduct while on duty, disregard of the law, etc.<sup>10</sup> During the same year a strike took place among the unorganized freight-handlers working for the Canadian Pacific Railway at Fort William, Ontario. Special constables were employed by the company, and as a result of altercations between certain of these and the strikers, rioting took place necessitating the calling in of the military. At the instigation of the Port Arthur Trades Council the congress passed a resolution protesting the employment of private constables by corporations. Again in 1914, consequent upon their employment as spotters on certain of the railways, both steam and electric, the congress demanded government control of detectives and the abolition of all private agencies in Canada.<sup>11</sup> In 1913, in connection with the coal strike on Vancouver Island, feeling reached a fever pitch over the presence of the troops and the arrests that were made partly in consequence.

<sup>8</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-third Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>11</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XV, 486.

The British Columbia Federation of Labor submitted a referendum to its member unions on the advisability of calling upon its entire membership of 14,000 workers to go out on a 48-hour holiday as a protest, but through a misunderstanding few unions sent in returns, and the matter was dropped.<sup>12</sup> The Canada Trades and Labor Congress adopted a resolution that every possible influence be used on those responsible for the presence of the militia and special police to have them withdrawn at once and to have the men who were in jail on charges of rioting immediately released.<sup>13</sup> The militia, however, in spite of these representations, remained in the strike area.

Finally, in recent years, Cape Breton has given cause for an airing of this whole question. At the Montreal convention of the congress, August, 1922, a telegram was received from Dan Livingston, president of District No. 26 of the United Mine Workers, whose members were on strike against wage reductions, asking that the congress protest against the sending of troops into the district, the purpose of which, it was asserted, could only be for breaking the strike, inasmuch as there had been no disorder. The executive committee of the congress, upon receipt of this message, wired the Prime Minister, who replied that no troops had been sent into the district at the instance of the government; that such troops as had been forwarded were requisitioned by the local authorities for the preservation of law and order. He further suggested that the parties who had requested the troops should be asked to withdraw their demand.<sup>14</sup>

The convention caused a second telegram, treating more in

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, XIV, 952.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 444.

<sup>14</sup> The stand of the Prime Minister that the federal government has no option under the Militia Act and is bound to furnish troops when a requisition is made was based upon secs. 80-87 of the Act. A copy of these sections is to be found on pp. 38-39 of the *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of the Congress*.

detail with the Livingston communication, to be forwarded to both Premier King and Premier Murray of Nova Scotia. Mr. King replied that he had communicated this wire to the officer in Nova Scotia under whose requisition troops had gone to the province, at the same time informing him that the federal government was most desirous of having the troops withdrawn. Mr. Murray's answer also loaded the responsibility for the presence of the provincial militia upon the local authorities who had asked for them and upon the disorderly parties who had occasioned the need for protection.<sup>15</sup>

Less than a year later, in connection with a strike by the steel workers of the British Empire Steel Corporation, troops were again brought into Cape Breton. The mine workers, ostensibly because of the presence of the soldiers and a detachment of provincial police, also went on strike to compel their withdrawal, and this notwithstanding an existing contract between the United Mine Workers and the corporation, and in spite of communications from President Lewis ordering them back to work. Several trades and labor councils and local branch unions in various parts of the Dominion adopted resolutions in protest against this use of troops and called upon the authorities to have them immediately removed.

Investigations by the executive council of the Canada Trades Congress having revealed the fact that under the Militia Act there was room for laxity in the requisitioning of troops, and that in the present instance the request had issued from no one responsible to public opinion, but from one of the county judges, it was recommended and adopted at the 1923 convention of the congress that

amendments should be sought to the Militia Act whereby the only authorities who could make requisition for the calling out of the militia in aid of the civil power should be either the municipal council of the district wherein riot may occur or be anticipated, or the Government of a Province, and

<sup>15</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XXII, 969.

that in either case those making the requisition should be absolutely responsible for the cost of such military aid, [and] further that the Federal Government should be given discretionary powers as to their compliance with such a requisition even when made by a Municipality or a Provincial Government. In this way direct responsibility would be fixed upon those answerable to the electors for their action.<sup>16</sup>

#### H. ACTIVITIES OF THE CONGRESS RELATING TO, AND AFFECTED BY, WORLD INTERNATIONAL BODIES

I. *International labor organization*.—At the close of the war the congress was on the alert to further any measures having for their purpose the organization of labor activities on a wider plan. In the fall of 1918 Secretary Draper was sent to Europe as the accredited expert and adviser on labor matters to Premier Borden, at the coming peace conference, and in January, following, we find vice-president Gustav Francq proceeding in the same direction under orders from the congress to take part in the deliberations of the representatives of the labor bodies of the foremost industrial nations, a call for a meeting having gone out at this time. The congress, through these spokesmen, thus

<sup>16</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of the Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 39, 115. Cf. also *Thirteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 23. It is noteworthy that prior to the passage of the Militia Act of 1904 the old law required a requisition from the mayor and two justices of the peace before the militia could be called out to relieve internal disorders. Cf. *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Convention of the Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 34. An act amending the Militia Act was passed in the session of 1924 giving effect to the recommendations made by the commission herein mentioned. By it, in future, the militia may be called out in case of local disturbances only on the motion of the Attorney-General of the province, and the provincial government will be responsible for the expense involved (see *Canadian Annual Review* [1924-25], p. 179). This amendment, however, makes no provision for any discretionary powers being retained by the federal authorities when they shall have received request from the attorney-general of a province, and recently the executive of the congress has been renewing its recommendation for this further modification. In its last interview with the Dominion ministry it also continued its demand for immediate legislation to prohibit corporations from maintaining armed forces (see *Canadian Congress Journal* [April, 1926]).

took an active part in the Trade Union Conference at Berne, which, among other things, pled for the creation of international labor machinery in connection with the League of Nations, and at Paris, where the Commission on International Labor Legislation, appointed by the Peace Conference, made that wish effective.

At the various conferences of the International Labor Organization thus created the representatives of the congress have always been present, accompanied by their advisers, as the spokesmen of the organized workers of Canada. Secretary Draper was appointed by the workers' delegates assembled at the Washington Conference in the autumn of 1919 as one of the six labor representatives on the "governing body" of the organization, and at the culmination of his three-year term representation of the congress was continued through the selection of President Moore, who was the Canadian workers' delegate at the second Geneva Conference.

Since the International Labor Organization began its work, the congress, in addition to assisting it with respect to Canadian matters in the compilation of statistical information, has assiduously sought to secure the ratification of the draft conventions and recommendations of its conferences.<sup>17</sup> This endeavor has involved the congress in a further effort to secure a definition of

<sup>17</sup> The Canadian Department of Justice has ruled that "the provisions of the Labor Part of the Treaty of Versailles do not impose any obligation on the Dominion of Canada to enact into law the different draft conventions or recommendations which may from time to time be adopted by the Conference. The obligation as set forth," as interpreted by the Department, "is simply in the nature of an undertaking on the part of each member within the period of one year . . . and in any case not later than eighteen months from the closing of the Conference, 'to bring the recommendations or draft conventions before the authority or authorities within whose competence the matter lies for the enactment of legislation, or other action'" (see *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 42). The judgment is apparently based on those clauses in the treaty concerning the application of draft conventions to those countries which have a federal form of government.

jurisdiction in the matters affected between the federal and provincial governments. At various times it sought in its representations both to the Dominion and to the Ontario and Quebec governments to have an interprovincial conference of ministers called to settle the question of jurisdiction and procedure.<sup>18</sup> The procedure, with respect to draft conventions and recommendations which are deemed by the Dominion government to fall within the provincial sphere, that has thus far been followed has been to forward them accompanied by a certified copy of an order-in-council containing the view of the government on the question of constitutional competence.<sup>19</sup>

In 1923 we find President Moore calling attention to the fact

<sup>18</sup> For recommendations of the federal-provincial conference of 1922, see *Canadian Congress Journal* (April, 1926).

<sup>19</sup> The question of proper jurisdiction was tested out through the federal Parliament referring the draft convention relating to the eight-hour day to the Supreme Court. At a hearing held in June, 1925, representations were made by the Ontario and Nova Scotia governments that all these conventions came within the section of the British North America Act respecting treaties, giving to the federal government full and exclusive powers to legislate upon them. The court, however, ruled against this pleading, holding that eight-hour legislation, except in so far as it concerned Dominion government employees, and those employed on Dominion government works, must remain a matter of provincial competence (see *Proceedings of Forty-first Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 43-45). The principal matters embodied in the draft conventions and recommendations of the conferences of the International Labor Organization that have had a bearing on the activities of the congress in relations with the federal government have been (1) the legal eight-hour day, (2) one day's rest in seven, (3) unemployment, (4) immigration and emigration, (5) the prevention of lead poisoning, and (6) prevention of anthrax; and in relation to the provincial governments, (1) the prohibition of the employment of women and young persons at night, (2) the protection of women and children against lead poisoning, (3) fixing the minimum age for the admission of children to industrial employment, (4) prohibition of the employment of women six weeks prior to, and following, childbirth, and (5) the application of the eight-hour day for other than Dominion employees, seamen, workers on inland navigation, certain classes of deep-sea fishermen, etc. Cf. *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 44-45, and *Canadian Congress Journal*, article by Tom Moore, pp. 313-16.

that the Dominion government, in spite of its moral obligations as a signatory of the Peace Treaty, had thus far evaded its responsibility through a technicality and had failed to ratify a single one of the draft conventions or recommendations passed at the four conferences of the International Organization.<sup>20</sup> He also points out that among the provincial legislatures, that of British Columbia is the only one that had actually passed legislation based on the recommendations affecting matters under provincial jurisdiction, and even in this case a rider had always been attached providing that the acts should not become effective until all the other provinces had passed similar legislation. Continuing, he proceeds to chide the provincial governments for their flagging interest in the International Organization, as evidenced by their failure to send representatives to the later conferences, and points out that through indorsement of the measures advocated at Washington and Geneva there is provided a means of bringing the uneven labor legislation of the provinces into uniformity as well as to give encouragement to those who in other countries are struggling for the improvement of their conditions.<sup>21</sup>

In its report to the conventions in recent years the executive council of the congress has voiced its appreciation of the

<sup>20</sup> *Canadian Congress Journal* (September, 1923).

<sup>21</sup> More recently labor has had cause to change its tone somewhat and to express appreciation for the amendments made to the Dominion Shipping Act (January, 1926), carrying into effect much of the substance of several conventions relating to conditions of employment at sea, and for various laws by some of the provincial parliaments concerning prohibition of night employment of young persons in industry, eight-hour day, etc. The congress expresses disappointment, however, over the decision of the Supreme Court on the question of legislative competence, holding that the only effective method of insuring uniform national action on these matters is through clothing the Dominion government with full power to legislate upon them. Nevertheless, until such power is given it urges the various parts of government to send representatives to the international conferences and to seek to co-operate in ratifying their proposals (*Canada Congress Journal* [April, 1926]; also *Canadian Annual Review* [1924-25], p. 179).

work of the International Labor Office, and especially for its various publications, containing among other matter valuable information on labor legislation being passed in the various countries. The connection of the congress with the International Labor Organization cannot fail to suggest to the mind of the onlooker that, providing the various governments in the Dominion see fit to follow the findings of the Geneva body, the Canadian labor movement is bound to be influenced toward more dependence on legislation as a means of advancing its interest than is the movement south of the line. The validity of such a prophecy, however, depends upon government attitude, and, back of this, the ability of the International Organization to find favor for its recommendations among the industrial nations of the world. One cannot but feel, moreover, that in many vital matters affecting labor Canada must march with the United States, regardless of what happens in more distant countries.<sup>22</sup>

2. *The International Federation of Trade Unions.*—The Trades and Labor Congress joined the International largely because it was apparent to its representatives at the Washington Conference of the International Labor Body in 1919 that the Amsterdam organization was destined to play an important part in controlling the policies of the labor group taking part in the work of the International Labor Body created under the Treaty of Peace. At the convention of the congress in 1920 it was stated that the work of the International Federation was to be confined almost exclusively to propaganda for legislation affecting organized workers in all civilized countries, but at the conference of the latter held in London in November of the same year the congress' representative, H. J. Halford, was impelled

<sup>22</sup> Evidence of this is found in the fact that Canadian representatives at the international conferences—government delegates as well as the representatives of labor and of industry—have, on different occasions, lined up on opposite sides from the delegates from Britain in taking the vote for proposed draft conventions (see *1925 Session of Conference of International Labor Organization*, I, 414; also *1920 Session Conference of International Labor Organization*, I, p. 478).

to protest that much of the discussion was revolutionary and out of accord with the tenets of his organization, which stood for legislative methods. On four leading resolutions entertained by the conference, viz., one calling for mutual cancellation of war debts, another demanding an international loan on the security of all nations, a third proposing non-co-operation with the International Labor Office (defeated and later repudiated), and a fourth advocating a systematic distribution of the world's available supplies of raw materials under international auspices, the Canadian delegate featured in the opposition. In the report of the executive council to the 1921 convention it was admitted that most of the resolutions of the conference, as well as some of the declarations and manifestoes issued by the International during the year, had either conflicted with the declared policies of the congress or were quite inapplicable to Canadian conditions. Nevertheless it defended the affiliation by reference to Canada's membership in the British Empire, her position as recipient of European workers as immigrants, her active participation in the work of the International Labor Office, as a signatory of the League of Nations, and finally through "consideration of the advantages to the workers of all countries in developing a true spirit of international understanding," expressed especially in the avoidance of future wars.<sup>23</sup> At subsequent conventions the congress has commended the International Federation for its work in collecting, compiling, and distributing to its affiliated organizations information regarding the activities of organized workers throughout the world, and for its energetic efforts in the cause of international peace. In the matter last mentioned the congress has co-operated by acting as an agency for the sale of peace stamps. With regard to the greater number of the activities of the Federation, however, the congress sees itself in the rôle of a well-wishing supporter

<sup>23</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 85-86.

rather than a direct beneficiary, inasmuch as they affect principally the workers in European countries.

#### I. EIGHT-HOUR-DAY MOVEMENT

The activities of the congress in relation to the question of hours in this latest period are mostly included in its effort to bring the eight-hour day into effect. In the main, as would be expected from its declared methods of functioning, it has left the direct struggle in the industrial field to the international unions, while it has sought to conserve the gains, or make new advances, as the case may be, by securing legislation to legalize this great object of labor's desire. Jurisdiction with respect to this matter, except where Dominion government employees are involved, is vested in the provincial legislatures, and hence the endeavors of the congress, in so far as they have been directed toward the federal government, have sought to bring benefits only to those engaged on public works.<sup>24</sup> The efforts of the provincial executives, however, have gone much farther, seeking to bring within the protection of such legislation the workers in all mines and factories, and often finding expression in the still more inclusive phrase, "all industries."

In 1905, when the truth with regard to the division of jurisdictions was apparently unknown, the congress attacked this subject with the resolution "that the Executive of this Trades and Labor Congress be authorized to take such measures as may be deemed necessary, to obtain the passing of an Act, by the Federal Parliament of Canada, providing for a legal eight-hour day throughout the Dominion."<sup>25</sup> The immediate stimulus for this demand, impressive enough at that date, was doubtless derived from the success of both the coal and metalliferous miners of British Columbia in obtaining an eight-hour law in the year

<sup>24</sup> For the controversy on the question of legislative competence of the Washington draft-convention relating to the eight-hour day, see above, p. 254.

<sup>25</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 56.

previous, and the campaign that was being carried on in 1905 by the International Typographical Union to establish an eight-hour day throughout the continent. While the convention of congress was in progress at Toronto, Typographical No. 191, of Winnipeg, was on strike, and to the men so engaged the meeting sent its sympathy and moral support.<sup>26</sup> The opportune time seems, however, to have passed before occasion offered for the executive to bring the program of labor demands before the government, and when this meeting took place no reference was made to the matter.

In 1907, however, President Verville, the only labor member in the House of Commons at this time, introduced an eight-hour bill to cover all public contracts, but it failed to make much progress. Nothing daunted, he brought in a similar measure in 1909. During the discussion Hon. R. Lemieux, Minister of Labor, stated certain difficulties in the way of passage of such a bill, and the position which he took has apparently been maintained by the Dominion government down to the present. An eight-hour law on government contracts, he argued, would be in contrast to provincial legislation as it then stood. The federal Parliament "could only pass such legislation as regards Government work because individual contracts came within the definition of 'civil rights,' which are under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Provinces." "It is for the Provinces," he continued, "to introduce eight-hour legislation, and then, under the Fair Wage clause, these hours would obtain under Government contracts." If, on the contrary, the Federal government were to adopt legislation forcing Dominion contractors to put into effect the eight-hour system, it would thereby trespass upon the usages and customs which exist in the different provinces.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 19; *Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 36-50.

<sup>27</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 54.

In spite of such setbacks, a new bill, carefully drafted by the solicitor of the congress, was introduced in the fall of 1910, and its progress in the House was one of the chief features of the session. It was taken up by the government then in power, and, in a greatly amended form, made the subject of a prolonged debate, but at the close of the session was still in committee. In the course of these proceedings the opposing positions of the congress and the Canadian Manufacturers' Association were set forth through written memoranda.<sup>28</sup>

In 1912 the subject was again made one of the first matters in the parliamentary program of the congress, but with no better results. In 1916 the eight-hour plank in the platform of principles was deleted and one supporting the six-hour day put in its place, the reason being given that there would be a great amount of unemployment when the armies disbanded, and a shorter day would better distribute whatever quantity of work there might be. This action was reversed three years later.

Beginning with 1920, the demands for eight-hour legislation were put forward in connection with the recommendations of the International Labor Organization. In that year we find the congress, led by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of Montreal, commanding the provincial executives to press the various provincial governments for such laws.<sup>29</sup> In accordance with this instruction, seven of these executive committees were reported in 1923 to have submitted requests to their respective governments.<sup>30</sup> Of these, only those of the far West have been requited with the passage of any legislation. In British Columbia, where the eight-hour day had long been the rule

<sup>28</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 50, 73; *Proceedings of the Twenty-seventh Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 12, 57.

<sup>29</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-sixth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 185.

<sup>30</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 71.

in the mines and building trades and among the printers, a bill was effectually supported through the legislature and became law in December, 1923. This measure, known as the "Hours of Work Act of 1923," is comprehensive in its scope, covering all mining, manufacturing, construction, and repair work, and leaving out only agriculture, horticulture, and dairying.<sup>31</sup> Even more recently the government of Saskatchewan, while as yet providing no specific measure dealing with hours, has indorsed the whole program of the International Labor Organization as enunciated to date. On the other hand, an eight-hour bill introduced by a labor member into the legislature of Manitoba during the last session met defeat.<sup>32</sup>

Meanwhile the executive council of the congress continued to press upon the federal government its responsibility for instituting the eight-hour system on Dominion public undertakings. But so far as the Conservative government was concerned, it met with a straight negative statement in 1922 when Premier Meighen declared: "Legislative jurisdiction on this question lies with the provincial authorities. Whenever any, or all, the provinces see fit to enact an eight-hour-day law, the Dominion Government will, if I am its leader, comply with it so far as Dominion Government employees are concerned."<sup>33</sup> No such definite declaration of position has issued from the present government.

#### J. DEMAND FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OLD-AGE PENSIONS

Almost regularly each year throughout the whole period the subject of "old-age pensions" has been before the conventions of the congress. As early as 1905 the following recommendation

<sup>31</sup> *Canadian Congress Journal* (June, 1924), p. 35.

<sup>32</sup> An eight-hour-day law was passed by Nova Scotia in 1925 covering the mining industry, but a similar measure affecting the building trades and steel plants met with defeat. *Canadian Annual Review* (1924-25), p. 181.

<sup>33</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 15.

was adopted: "that in our opinion the time is opportune to introduce legislation making provision for the maintenance of deserving poor, old, or disabled citizens, who are unable to maintain themselves, . . . ." Attempts, however, made in 1906 and 1907 by the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners to get the congress to ask the government to pay members of such unions as paid superannuation and unemployment benefits an amount equal to one-half that paid by such unions, the same to serve as the beginning of a national system of old-age pensions, failed to meet with the good will of the conventions. By 1912 earlier efforts were in some measure rewarded by the appointment of a special committee by the House of Commons to inquire into the advisability of establishing a system of old-age pensions and to hear evidence from representative people throughout the country. At this time we find the congress engaged in propaganda to impress this parliamentary committee, and also busy with preventing pensions from being side-tracked by a scheme of government annuities sponsored by Sir Richard Cartwright.

During the war the question was much discussed, pensions being singled out as one of the first subjects to press for at the meetings with the federal government in 1914 and 1915. The matter at this time was connected with the prospective arrangement of pensions for disabled overseas soldiers and their dependents, but, despite efforts of the congress, the "soldiers of industry" were left out. Meanwhile resolutions continued to be entertained each year, originating largely with the Toronto and London trades councils and especially from the Toronto street railway employees. At the meeting between the executive of the congress and the ministers of the government in 1921 the labor representatives were informed that the Royal Commission on Industrial Relations appointed in 1919 was charged with investigating this matter in the course of its general survey. Finally, with all these inquiries resulting in no positive

action, a special committee was appointed at the 1923-24 session of Parliament to make a further study of the question. During May, 1924, President Moore and Vice-President J. T. Foster appeared before this committee and presented the views of the congress as expressed, in particular, at the Vancouver convention in 1923. The memorandum submitted called attention to the backwardness of Canada among industrial nations in regard to the matter, the great need of such legislation as shown by the constant demand for it over a long period of years, the number of private and public charities and other institutions that were at present engaged in caring for the aged, and through which, after all, the burden of support came back upon the people, and finally, to the recent publications on social insurance legislation by the International Labor Organization. The memorandum included suggestions calculated to instruct the committee concerning the nature and administration of the pension system which the workers desired. The chief points suggested were the following:<sup>34</sup> (1) That in order to abolish abuse and insure equality of treatment to all Canadian citizens, the responsibility for such protection should rest with the federal government. (2) That under the system established all persons having reached a certain age, and in receipt of an income not

<sup>34</sup> *Canadian Congress Journal* (June, 1924), pp. 20 ff. The recommendations of this parliamentary committee (*Labor Gazette*, XXIV, 580) were subsequently embodied in a bill which passed the House of Commons on May 28, 1926, without a division, but which suffered defeat in the senate by a vote of 45 to 21. By its terms it was proposed that the Dominion government would contribute to the various provinces one-half of the net amount paid out by them in pensions, the payment of pensions being contingent upon the passing of legislation in the individual provinces to take advantage of the federal act. Pensions with a maximum of \$240 a year were to be granted to British subjects of seventy years or over resident in Canada for 20 years (*Labor Gazette*, XXVI, 527). During the progress of this measure in Parliament the spokesmen for the congress, while giving it their full support, were seeking to modify its provisions by increasing the amount from twenty to thirty dollars per month and to reduce the age limit of its application from seventy to sixty-five (*Canadian Congress Journal* [April, 1926], p. 12).

greater than a stipulated amount, should be eligible for benefits. (3) That provisions should be included for those under the specified age who are totally incapacitated. (4) That the majority of Canadian workers has held that all the money should be provided from state funds. (5) If, however, a system should be adopted wherein a part of the funds are contributed by the workers themselves, the method of payment of these weekly or monthly premiums should be by way of the post-office and not through collections made where the workers are employed. And here the matter rests.

#### K. THE DEFENSE OF THE FOREIGN CONNECTION; ATTACKS FROM OUTSIDE THE MOVEMENT

We have seen how the idea of Canadian organized labor existing as a minor fraction of a general continental movement has been repugnant to a section of the organized workers of Canada. We are now to make an investigation of an attack, or rather a series of attacks, upon the American connection and American leadership, with its impetus coming from outside the labor ranks.

To find the beginning of this controversy it will be necessary to recur again to the events in British Columbia in 1903 connected with the activities of the American Labor Union and its affiliates, the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees and the Western Federation of Miners.<sup>35</sup> It will be recalled that a royal commission investigated the conditions in the various centers of disturbance and brought out a report on its findings. In this it expressed as its opinion that these three organizations, on account of their immoderate methods and purposes and their unquestioned foreign leadership, should be declared illegal.<sup>36</sup> "It is obviously against the public interest," read the report, "that any body of Canadian workmen should be subject to be called

<sup>35</sup> See above, pp. 150-53.

<sup>36</sup> *Labor Gazette*, IV, 133.

out on strike by a foreign authority over whom neither our legislatures or courts can exercise control, and that whether they have any grievances against their employers or not. . . .” It represented that this had been the case with most of the British Columbia miners, as they had only struck as a result of the machinations of persons acting for the central executive of the Western Federation of Miners at Denver, and were thus being used to support the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees against the Canadian Pacific Railway. It found the railway brotherhood to be a secret organization of highly centralized power with headquarters in San Francisco. Its purpose of organization was to include all classes of workers on a railway, irrespective of the particular kind of work they might have to do, or whether or not they belonged to other railway organizations. The commission found, moreover, that its strike in Canada was directed by its president through telegrams and communications, and that startling methods, involving especially a free use of the sympathetic strike, had been in operation.<sup>37</sup> To the Western Federation of Miners in its strikes at this time it also ascribed, with its condemnation, such methods as the boycott, sympathetic strike, blacklist, and intimidation; while against some of its leaders it brought charges of gross faithlessness and double dealing, and wanton violation of contracts.<sup>38</sup>

Looking to remedy, it advocated that Parliament make it an offense for any person not a British subject, who has not lived in the country for at least one year, to procure or incite any employee in Canada to quit employment without the consent of his employer, or for any person in Canada to communicate in any way the contents of an order or request by persons ordinarily resident without Canada, having in view the bringing about of a strike inside the country.

As a result of these findings and proposals a bill was introduced into the federal parliament substantially embodying this

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 133-34.

recommendation and proposing to make it illegal for anyone not a British subject to enter Canada and advise or counsel with Canadian workmen to seek an increase of wages.<sup>39</sup> Meanwhile the Trades Congress, at its convention following the strike in British Columbia, had denounced the extreme revolutionary methods and breaches of contract by the radical organizations and had recommended them to come back to the tried methods of the internationals. It had protested, however, in no uncertain terms against the suggestions of the commission, arguing that the ill-considered actions of a few irresponsible organizations were "relied upon to excuse . . . drastic recommendations which, if carried into effect, would strike a severe blow at all labor organizations."<sup>40</sup> Now that this measure had been introduced at Ottawa it was viewed by the officials of the congress as a direct blow at international trade unionism. Secretary Draper carried copies of the bill to the Boston convention of the American Federation of Labor, and discussion of it occupied a considerable part of President Gompers' speech on that occasion, as well as of President Flett's address to the congress' convention somewhat later. Certain of Mr. Gompers' remarks which were quoted by Mr. Flett to the Canadian meeting at Montreal are instructive for our purposes and will bear repeating. Among other things he said:

In our movement it is well known that no strikes are ordered in one country to occur in another; they are not provoked, aye, not even counselled or advised. When strikes occur on the part of any bona fide trade union affiliated to the American Federation of Labor, either in the United States or Canada, the initiative must be taken by the workmen who desire to strike, and the only participation of other members in the organization is either to veto the application to strike or to approve it, and in the latter

<sup>39</sup> *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 13.

<sup>40</sup> *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 66.

event to contribute financially towards sustaining the men engaged in the controversy.<sup>41</sup>

He further declared that no shadow of the faithlessness that had marked the activities of these radical western organizations could be laid upon the internationals connected with the American Federation of Labor, and announced the right of the Federation and the congress "to insist that the bona fide labor movement and its men shall not be ostracized or outlawed. . . ."<sup>42</sup> Subsequently we find the congress working to dispel the opinion prevalent in many quarters that representation at its convention had been limited by the Berlin meeting to such trades and labor organizations as had their headquarters in the United States, and that purely Canadian bodies were debarred. It also raised a fund by subscription to assist in defeating the Lougheed bill in the Dominion senate.

This attack having been disposed of, a second bill calculated to be as subversive of American unionism in Canada as that of Senator Lougheed was introduced into the same body in 1907 by Senator McMullen. It proposed to make it a criminal offense for international officers to intervene in any way in industrial disputes in Canada. That the attitude of the majority of the senators, however, had changed with respect to the question of internationalism, probably largely through the correction of misunderstandings during the discussion of the earlier measure, was shown by the fact that the new bill was soon given a "six months hoist."<sup>43</sup> Notwithstanding these defeats, the efforts of the enemies of internationalism were not yet at rest. Senator McMullen made a second ineffectual attempt at the parliamentary session, 1908-9, bringing in a bill as an amendment of

<sup>41</sup> *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 14.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>43</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-third Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 45.

the Conciliation and Labor Act, but substantially the same as his earlier measure in its intended results.

The next threat came through the instigation of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. At its meeting in Hamilton in September, 1909, that body passed a unanimous resolution asking the government to enact legislation to debar American labor leaders from operating in Canada and from interfering in any way with Canadian labor,<sup>44</sup> and, following this, during the 1910 session, Senator Belcourt brought in a bill which proposed, through an amendment of section 497 of the Criminal Code of Canada, to make illegal every trade union whose members were not all British subjects by declaring them covered by the clause relating to conspiracy in restraint of trade. But in the case of this bill, as with that of its predecessor, the parliamentary solicitor of the congress sought interviews with various senators, and as a result of his efforts, together with protests coming in from various parts of the country in response to a circular issued from congress headquarters, the author of the measure asked leave to withdraw it.<sup>45</sup> The executive council of the congress stated in its report to the 1910 convention that it felt safe in saying that the antagonism toward international trade unionism which was formerly manifested by the Senate, as a whole, had passed away, and that the few lingering traces of it were to be found in only a few prejudiced individuals.<sup>46</sup>

So far as involving any direct attack upon the existence of the internationals is concerned, this prophecy has been borne out. That forces were still operating, however, to bring about their downfall at the earliest opportunity is evidenced by the activity of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the in-

<sup>44</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 28, 58.

<sup>45</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 54.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

dorsement of the Belcourt bill by the Canadian Federation of Labor, and the recent declarations of certain members of the Quebec legislature. With regard to the last-mentioned, the discussion arose from a resolution for compulsory incorporation of all unions introduced by a private member, but eventually became involved with the question as to whether or not the workers of the province had a right to belong to international unions or should confine themselves to purely Canadian unions. Premier Taschereau, referring to the strike of the compositors of Quebec City as a part of a general campaign for the forty-four hour week by the International Typographical Union, and as involving the receipt by himself of a telegram from President McParland, of Indianapolis, said it was controlled by persons outside of Canada, and he objected to strikes being ordered and controlled by foreigners. The discussion ended with the acceptance of an amendment to the original motion which read as follows: "Resolved that this House, recognizing that Canadian workers are among the best elements of our population, invite the labor organizations of this Province to adopt an essentially Canadian constitution, and continue to co-operate in an orderly and law abiding fashion to the industrial development of the Province."<sup>47</sup>

This pronouncement was keenly resented by the congress and by international organizations throughout Canada as being an exhibition of the partiality in favor of the national unions which it is charged has characterized the Quebec government.<sup>48</sup>

#### L. OTHER LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES DIRECTED TOWARD OTTAWA

In the foregoing we have attempted to select the subjects which during the last twenty years have been of most vital interest to the congress in its relations with the federal government.

<sup>47</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 84-87.

<sup>48</sup> *Twelfth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 243-44.

That the matters dealt with are by no means inclusive of all its endeavors at Ottawa is evidenced by the fact that the memorandum presented to the ministers in January, 1924, included demands for legislation arranged under eighteen separate topic headings. To a few of these remaining matters we shall now give brief attention. Honorable among them from the standpoint of age is the subject of Dominion "fair wage" legislation affecting employees on government contracts. The basic law, calling for the "payment of such wages as are generally accepted as current in each trade for competent workmen in the district where the work is carried on," was secured in 1900, but problems dealing with its extension as the field of operations of the government has expanded, and especially concrete instances of supposed abuses in its administration, have continually been to the fore in the conventions of the congress. Examples of the demands that have been carried to Ottawa are: (1) one embodying an attempt in 1904 to bring about the application of the Act to all enterprises aided by government bounties, the special mark aimed at being the Dominion Iron and Steel Company; (2) repeated reminders that the law was being violated in connection with the post-war operations on the Welland Canal;<sup>49</sup> and (3) recent demands for heavier penalties against contractors who violate the provisions of the Act.<sup>50</sup> An interest of kindred nature, though not a matter coming within the purview of the Fair Wage Act, has been the rate of compensation to public servants. Over a considerable period in the earlier decade of the century the congress supported its affiliate, the Federated Association of Letter Carriers, in its yearly demand for an increase in the salaries of its membership.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 62.

<sup>50</sup> *Canadian Congress Journal* (February, 1924), p. 41.

<sup>51</sup> See example, *Proceedings of the Twenty-third Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 71.

A second matter of concern to the congress has been the establishment and maintenance of "one day's rest in seven" as a legal institution. In 1906 a measure was passed by the federal government known as the Lord's Day Act, which was hailed by the congress as the fulfilment of its desire in this direction. Exceptions to the general application of the Act were necessary, however, and difficulties arose in connection with these exceptions, with the result that the high expectations expressed at that time have not been realized. The law, according to the most recent representations to the government, has, practically speaking, never been enforced, and legislation is being sought (1924), either through amending the old measure or by the passage of an act more scientifically conceived, to assure to every worker the opportunity of reserving one day in each week free to himself and his family. The congress in this matter again has been supported, since 1921, by the activities of the International Labor Organization.<sup>52</sup>

Another objective that has been kept in view throughout the period has been an act to secure protection for union labels. In 1904 a bill was introduced in the House of Commons by Ex-president Ralph Smith, but it failed of passage at the time, and the following year we find the congress executive reporting to the convention at Toronto that "all the bright hopes" that had been entertained from time to time regarding protection for the union label had gone for naught, owing to the unreasonable opposition of the senate. "The action of that body," it declared, "is a direct invitation to unscrupulous manufacturers to issue bogus labels at will."<sup>53</sup> In 1919 certain promises were obtained from the Minister of Labor with regard to bringing in the de-

<sup>52</sup> *Canadian Congress Journal* (February, 1924), p. 41. *Proceedings of Thirty-ninth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 46.

<sup>53</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 11.

sired legislation, but the same demand has continued monotonously down to date.

Another "hardy perennial" has been the demand for reform or abolition of the Senate. The more general expression, "abolition of all non-elective bodies," is a recent modification. Historically, the focus of condemnation has been the federal Upper House. Sometimes the demand has been to reform it by making it popular with its membership based on some system of electoral division different from that obtaining for members of the Lower House. At other times less consideration has been had for its fate.<sup>54</sup> In general it is held that the Senate has always been the bulwark of the large commercial and financial interests and an obstacle in the path of true democracy. Coming closer home, it is remarked that "practically all labor and social legislation is defeated in the Upper Chamber," as witness the fate of the thrice-rejected union-label bill, the ill-starred amendments to the Industrial Disputes Act, Immigration Act, etc. In brief, it is argued that in Canada as in England, before any considerable social progress can be made along constitutional lines the obstacle of an authoritative irresponsible upper house must be removed.<sup>55</sup>

The expressions of the congress with regard to the tariff have at no time constituted a prominent part of its debates. References to it prior to the war were for the most part in the way of protest against any general increase in the scale of duties. Beginning in 1919 with a resolution by the Saskatoon Trades and Labor Council, the congress has gone on record as favoring, and has definitely urged, the creation of an independent tariff commission on which labor should have representation and by means of which tariff questions may be removed from the political arena. Except for such resolutions affecting individual trades

<sup>54</sup> Cf. *Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 46; also *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 46.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. *Canadian Congress Journal* (July, 1923), p. 273.

as were adopted in 1918 and 1919 seeking better protection of bookbinders, amendments to the Copyright Act which would compel the printing in Canada of many publications now printed in the United States, and stricter enforcement of certain customs regulations, the conventions of recent years have relegated discussion on the tariff chiefly to the elaboration of this one scientific demand. At a hearing before a special government commission of inquiry on the tariff, however, in 1921, the executive council outlined rather definitely the opinions of organized labor in Canada with regard to the subject as ascertained in 1918 for a joint conference with the executives of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association and certain other bodies. The position, as set forth in this statement, involves the acceptance of the principle of protection looking to the utilization of Canadian raw resources within the country, but prescribes for industries so protected: (1) strict accountability to use Canadian laborers as far as possible, (2) government inspection to guarantee a high standard of working conditions, and, (3) government control over their capitalization to guard against stock watering.<sup>56</sup>

The congress has given whole-hearted support to the cause of international peace, protesting against military expenditures and the creation of military attitudes through educational processes. Attention was especially directed along these lines in the years immediately preceding the war, the conventions being very receptive to the opinions stated by the greatly revered Keir Hardie. Since 1918 it has indorsed all responsible movements looking to reduction of armaments among the nations, and has made "disarmament" one of its objectives at its meetings with the ministry.

Other recent demands have been for health insurance, prison reform, joint councils for adjustment of conditions, wages and salaries in the civil service, the prosecution of scientific and

<sup>56</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 53-55.

industrial research, government aid for the co-operative movement in Canada, abolition of the sales tax, amendments to the shipping act for the better protection of seamen along lines suggested by the Genoa Conference of the International Labor Organization,<sup>57</sup> an Act guaranteeing the right to organize,<sup>58</sup> and amendments to the Election Act involving (1) provision for proportional representation in group constituencies and transferable vote in single constituencies, (2) to make election day a public holiday throughout the Dominion, (3) to abolish forfeiture of election deposits, (4) repeal of the clause in the Franchise Act of 1920 which prohibits trade unions and similar organizations from contributing to election campaign funds.<sup>59</sup>

#### M. ACTIVITIES OF THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVES

The provincial executive committees are responsible to the congress for organizing the workers in their respective fields and for maintaining the organizations already there in a healthy condition. At various times in most of the provinces they have taken an active part in bringing out and supporting candidates in the local and Dominion elections, and have given their services to promote the interests of the workers in connection with industrial disputes. Notwithstanding these activities, however, the burden of their effort, taking it from year to year, has centered upon the influencing of legislation at the various provincial capitals.

It would be quite impracticable in a work of this kind to attempt to follow separately the measures sought and to discuss the successes and failures connected therewith at each of the

<sup>57</sup> Legislation on this matter was secured at parliamentary session of 1922-23.

<sup>58</sup> Refers to difficulties of police, etc.

<sup>59</sup> A demand of the congress made on successive years at an earlier period until it finally resulted in the accomplishment of its object was that requesting a separate Department of Labor in the federal government with a full-time responsible minister. The request was granted in 1908.

seats of government. With regard to many of the matters involved the same demands have been made at the different capitals, the backward provinces repeating a few years later what the progressive ones have demanded before, and the story, although it contains chapters interesting enough to those who seek in it the history of events in a particular province, becomes wearisome and monotonous when taken as a whole. Such are the demands for amendments to factory and mine acts (the originals having been passed in most provinces in the earlier period), and the appointment of inspectors, etc., for the enforcement of provisions already existing; demands for similar legislation for shops and foundries; demands for the compulsory licensing of engineers; demands for fair-wage requirements in government contracts, annually reiterated; demands for the abolition of property qualification for candidates for public office, and also elimination of the election deposit requirement; demands for free government employment bureaus and for the abolition of private agencies; demands for free compulsory education, with the age of school attendance increasing to sixteen years at the later part of the period; also for technical education under commissions appointed by the provinces; demands beginning about 1909 and running for close to a decade, asking for a legal minimum wage, and also (later) for widows' pensions and allowances for deserted mothers; demands, especially in the central provinces, for safety legislation for the benefit of street car conductors; demands for the creation of provincial bureaus of labor; for workmen's compensation legislation and amendments to acts already on the books;<sup>60</sup> demands

<sup>60</sup> The story of the evolution of workmen's compensation legislation in Canada involves many complexities. Ontario led off with the passage of an act in 1886 modeled on the British Act of 1880, and before the end of the century had amended it five times. British Columbia passed its first act in 1891, Manitoba in 1893, Nova Scotia in 1900, and New Brunswick in 1903. Most of these measures were called employers' liability acts, as in fact they all were in substance, in spite of their various amendments. The first progressive legislation in Canada was

for sanitary protective legislation, making necessary the removal of old wall paper and kalsomine in connection with new papering operations, calling for the inspection of barber shops, and forbidding the making of clothes in the homes of the workers; demands for the eight-hour day in government contracts; and finally, the request in recent years for legislation to give effect to such decisions of the annual conferences of the International Labor Organization as are considered to come within the jurisdiction of the provincial legislatures.

Another group includes requests that have been less universal, arising rather from local conditions or in the particular philosophy of certain provinces or areas. In this class are to be named: (1) The representations in Quebec throughout the period, laying emphasis, not only upon the need of free compulsory education, but also upon the desirability of eliminating the system of plural school commissions, and introducing uniform

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passed by Alberta in 1908, when it placed an Act on its statute books modeled on the British Act of 1897 involving repudiation of the doctrine of contributory negligence in all dangerous manual labor industries and forbidding the practice of "contracting out." Manitoba followed with a law almost identical in 1910. At the close of 1910 the situation with respect to protection from accidents was one of great unevenness among the provinces. Two of the western provinces presented fairly advanced legislation; while Nova Scotia and British Columbia followed at some distance along the same lines by way of amendments; Ontario and New Brunswick, in spite of some modifications, still favored the principle of "employers' liability," and Quebec was operating under its peculiar Act of 1901; finally, Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island boasted no legislation whatever (cf. *Labor Gazette*, XI, 546 ff.). In 1910 the Ontario executive of the congress declared the Workmen's Compensation Act of that province obsolete and asked for a commission to investigate the whole question for the purpose of bringing in a new act. The Ontario government soon after named Sir William Meredith, chief justice of the province, to study the matter and report his conclusions. During the autumn of 1911 Sir William received the opinions of both the Trades Congress and the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the officers of each organization submitting its views in an elaborate memorandum. Some of the chief points contended for by the congress were: (1) the new law should cover all employees, including public employees; (2) it should cover all injuries

school books in place of the numerous texts prevailing in the different church educational institutions.<sup>61</sup> (2) The demands in the West for legislation in restraint of immigration, directed in British Columbia against Asiatics and in Manitoba against European mechanics. (3) The demands in the western provinces for an extension of public ownership, naming at times lumber and mines, as well as telephones and street car lines, in addition to the more conservative eastern demand. (4) The repeated demand in British Columbia, at the instance of the Allied Printing Trades Council of Vancouver, that the government printing office should supply all textbooks for schools at cost, and the recent representations of the three western provinces that the

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arising in or out of employment, and also occupational diseases; (3) it should provide for state insurance in connection, and also for the creation of a provincial department for administration of same; (4) the schedules of payments should be modeled upon the British act; (5) the entire cost should fall upon the employer; and (6) the doctrine of contributory negligence should have no place in its terms.

The Manufacturers' Association differed chiefly with respect to the last two points. It recommended that a compensation relief fund should be established through contributions from workers and employers in proportions depending on the hazard of the industry and the fault of the employer for accidents on the one hand and the fault of the workman on the other (cf. *Proceedings of the Twenty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 115-18).

The result of the commission's study was the passage in 1914 of the Ontario Workmen's Compensation Act, combining the three features: (1) inclusiveness in respect to victims compensated regardless of negligence, (2) collective, as opposed to individual, liability of employers, and (3) administration and adjudication of claims by a board instead of the ordinary courts. Other provinces have followed in succession until now six of the provinces have a law embodying all these features (cf. Price, in *Canadian Congress Journal* [February, 1924], p. 32). The attention of the congress during the past decade has been directed mainly to bringing the other provinces into line with Ontario, and in some cases with increasing the benefit from 50 per cent to 66⅔ per cent of the average wage.

<sup>61</sup> This latter condition, according to the Quebec executive officers, has its *raison d'être* largely in the financial gains which it brings to the Catholic societies that publish and sell such books. Cf. *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 22.

whole financial burden of education, including that connected with higher institutions, should be assumed by the state, through the establishment of merit scholarships and the abolition of tuition fees. (5) The request at various times in Ontario and certain of the western provinces for legislation granting autonomous powers to municipalities in regard to taxation in order that they may discriminate between properties in the laying of assessments.

In general it may be said by way of comparison that, apart from the mining legislation achieved under pressure by the Provincial Workmen's Association in Nova Scotia and certain educational concessions in the same province, the activities of the western provinces and Ontario have been more progressive than those of the East, and that, both in the legislation obtained and in the enforcement of laws already on the books, the maritime provinces and Quebec have lagged behind. Quebec in particular, in spite of the constant efforts of the labor executive, has been noted for its failure to enforce its factory and child labor acts, and the Nova Scotia report to the congress in 1907 included the significant remark that the province had had a factory act among its statutes for seven years, but no inspector had up to that time been appointed.

The congress has sought for some time to secure a conference of representatives of the provincial governments for the purpose of bringing the labor laws throughout the Dominion into some measure of uniformity. Such a meeting would indeed be desirable from the standpoint of labor, if, through it, the backward provinces could be educated to view these matters in a more progressive light. It is hardly conceivable, however, that common ground could be reached through the advanced governments retreating to positions occupied in the past. A commission with recommendatory powers which investigated and reported upon this question shortly after the close of the war

was acknowledged by the congress as having been of service in an educational way.<sup>62</sup>

### III. ACTIVITIES OF THE CONGRESS OTHER THAN LEGISLATIVE LOBBYING

#### A. PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION AND POLITICAL ACTION

In the twentieth century, as in the later decades of the nineteenth, the sentiment has been repeatedly expressed that labor, in order to make its legislative programs effective, should have more representatives at the various seats of government. At times this opinion has found expression in demands that the Trades and Labor Congress should take its stand as a political organization with a platform directed to that end, and should give financial backing to the candidates which it places in the field. Such attempts, however, have always failed; the congress has never gone farther than to encourage the organization and the activities of labor parties, which, it insists, shall stand as entities separate from itself. And, if we may anticipate the more detailed discussion which is to follow, we may add that Canadian labor had at no time up to the war given indication of sufficient class-consciousness to support successfully at the polls any considerable number of candidates. More recently, while never maintaining more than two or three members in the federal House, it has co-operated with the farmers to establish itself as the majority party in two of the provinces, and has made large inroads upon the old parties in others.

Taking the period from the beginning, we find that in the election of 1904 the position of the congress as a force to effect legislation was considerably weakened. A. W. Puttee, who, as we have seen, did so much for many years to forward the cause of labor at Ottawa, was defeated at Winnipeg. E. F. Clarke, of

<sup>62</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-fifth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 69. A potent force making for uniformity at the present time operates through the recommendations of the International Labor Organization conferences.

Toronto, who, while not elected on a labor ticket, was a trade unionist and a true friend of labor, was taken by death. "Labor representation," declared President Flett at the convention of 1904, was "never more needed in the House of Commons than now." While the cause was making advances politically in Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, in Canada it was falling back.<sup>63</sup> Among the provincial legislatures, British Columbia, stimulated by adverse legal decisions, succeeded in electing two members, but to offset this, Alphonse Verville, president-elect of the congress, suffered defeat in Quebec. In 1905, following the report of Mr. O'Donoghue, the parliamentary representative at Ottawa, a resolution passed the convention by a vote of 49 to 15 worded as follows: "that the Congress act on the solicitor's suggestion that where there is a reasonable hope of electing a labor candidate one should be placed in the field, but where no such hope can be reasonably held, the candidate whose record gives most hope of receiving from him support for such measures as the Congress is endeavoring to have enacted should be supported by wage earners without regard to political affiliation of the candidate."<sup>64</sup> A more positive attack on the situation is expressed in a resolution by Delegate Francq, of Montreal, to the effect that all trades and labor councils of the province of Quebec should consider the formation of an independent labor party.<sup>65</sup>

It was at the convention at Victoria in 1906, however, that the congress adopted its creed with respect to what should be the proper course for Canadian labor to take in the political field and what part the congress itself should play in carrying through the program. Encouraged by the recent British elections and by

<sup>63</sup> *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 9.

<sup>64</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 45.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

certain concessionary expressions from Mr. Gompers, but especially by the election of President Verville to the House of Commons by an unusual majority in Montreal where two years earlier he had been defeated, some half-dozen resolutions were submitted from various member organizations praying for an expression by the congress in favor of independent political action. The measure that was finally adopted was one submitted by Mr. P. M. Draper, of the Ottawa Typographical Union No. 102. Following a preamble which set forth the need of parliamentary representation and the proved excellence of the platform of principles of the congress, but declaring that the congress must continue to function as in the past, as the "legislative mouthpiece of organized labor . . . . irrespective and independent of any body engaged in the effort to send representatives of the people to Parliament and the Legislatures, . . . ." this resolution requested:

1. That this Congress endorse the idea of sending representatives of labor to Parliament and to the Local Legislatures. . . . .

2. That such action as may be necessary to attain this object shall be independent of this Congress.

3. That the Platform of Principles of this Congress be recommended as the platform to be adopted by those engaged in this independent effort.

4. That immediately upon the adjournment of this convention the Provincial Executives of the Congress take the preliminary steps to summon a convention of the trade unionists of their respective provinces, and those in sympathy with organized labor, for the purpose of forming the necessary association to carry on thereafter the work of electing labor men.

5. That upon such conventions being summoned and convened the functions of the Provincial Executives in this regard shall cease.<sup>66</sup>

Attempts to amend this resolution (1) by adopting instead the principles of the Socialist party, and (2) by using in addition the principles of the Quebec Labor party, along with those of the Trades Congress, as the platform of the new Canadian Labor party, both failed after hours of debate. An amendment pro-

<sup>66</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 82.

posed by a British Columbia delegate, that after the provincial executive committees were elected the executive of the congress should call them into conference "to determine upon federal united action," and that when such conference had taken place the functions of the provincial committees in this matter should be at an end, was also lost.<sup>67</sup> The defeat of this last amendment is significant as indicating the thought of the majority at this time in its insistence upon provincial autonomy in labor's political effort. The Draper motion was finally passed in a division showing sixty-eight delegates in favor and seven opposed. Opposition centered chiefly in the Socialist group and in British Columbia.

Notwithstanding this indorsement of political action by the congress, Canadian labor made very little showing in the legislatures for some years. President Verville was successful a second time in 1908, and again in 1911, and made himself very helpful to the labor cause at Ottawa. In Ontario, where a provincial branch of the Canadian Labor Party was organized in 1907, the congress was ably represented by Allan Studhohme. But in Manitoba, where Winnipeg was such a stronghold of trade unionism, we find the candidates both to the Dominion and provincial houses going down to defeat in 1907 and 1911, while those of Nova Scotia showed no better results. Part of the blame for these failures was laid to the fact that election day was not a holiday, and legislation was sought—for the most part ineffectually—to right this condition and thus enable the worker to register his vote without losing his time. A part of the reason, on the other hand, was ascribed to apathy on the part of the workmen and their failure to throw off old party loyalties. Support was expected in the political field through an alliance in 1907 with a farmer's organization called the Canadian Society of Equity, the latter being accepted as an affiliate of organized labor. But neither this nor the stimulating presence of Keir Hardie, who

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

visited the congress in convention both in 1908 and in 1912, was sufficient to turn the political tide in labor's favor in the larger fields. In 1915 Mr. R. A. Rigg was elected to the Manitoba legislature as a Labor candidate, having previously served as an alderman in the city of Winnipeg. Standing for the federal House in 1917 in opposition to the platform of conscription, he was defeated. In municipal politics, where the trade councils could canvass the whole area of the contest, a better showing was made.

In 1913, with favorable legislation represented as being almost at a standstill at Ottawa, and with business depression beginning to hamper the effective functioning of the unions by industrial methods, the congress was again impelled to consider the matter of taking a more direct part in the political field. It referred the question of the advisability of the congress supporting labor candidates financially to the incoming executive to examine and report upon at the next convention. The latter, the following year, declared it could see no reason at that time for changing the expressed policy of the congress with regard to political action as laid down at Victoria in 1906. While declaring for the encouragement of every effort toward working-class representation, it indorsed the principle of provincial autonomy as giving a chance to the workers in each province "to reach a common ground for action, taking into consideration the different shades of political opinion among the working class." Time and opportunity were needed to develop a national political movement in Canada. This reaffirmation of the Victoria platform was concurred in by the congress.<sup>68</sup>

What seemed like a real departure from this traditional policy was planned at the Ottawa convention in 1917. The executive council, which had been asked from the meeting of the year before to bring in a recommendation as to the advisability of establishing a labor party for all Canada, declared that the Vic-

<sup>68</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirtieth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 16, 130-33.

toria position which had been taken "in view of the different conditions that obtained in different parts of the Dominion, having regard for the religious, traditional, and other influences which had an important bearing upon the psychology of the workers," had not resulted in the building up of a "harmonious and virile workers' political organization." It expressed its opinion that the time had come when the workers of Canada should follow British precedent and organize a labor party upon such a basis that trade unionists, socialists, Fabians, co-operators, and farmers can unite to promote legislation in the best interest of the wealth producers of the nation." It spoke of the action of the Independent Labor party of Ontario in providing for the indorsement of candidates "nominated by other strictly working-class organizations" as "highly commendable" and suggestive of the possibility of organizing a national labor party that would include the various groups mentioned. As a result of this report the convention went on record as follows:

We, therefore, strongly recommend the organization of an Independent Labor Party for Canada upon the same lines as the British Labor Party has been organized, and giving recognition to organizations having similar objects as those affiliated with the British Labor Party. With a view to giving effect to this recommendation we would strongly urge that all working class political organizations in each province call a conference of the respective organizations entitled to partnership in such a Labor Party and proceed to co-operate for political action, and also that the incoming Executive Council take immediately the necessary initiatory steps to have these conferences called.<sup>69</sup>

In spite of the emphasis laid, in the report, upon British precedent and the organizing of a Dominion-wide labor party, we find that the principle of provincial autonomy was still guarded, and what the congress sought to do was, first, to encourage provincial sections and then assist them to build together. In 1918 the executive report stated that six provinces, viz., British

<sup>69</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-third Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 43-44, 169, 176.

Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia, had carried out instructions and held conventions to organize the provincial sections, and that, while the plan of organization differed slightly in the different provinces, there was an evident desire to organize upon such a basis as would afford "adequate opportunity for men of different views on working-class political action to come together to present a united front in the interests of the workers of the Dominion." The congress recommended continuance until every province was thoroughly organized, and that the joint executive committees of the provincial parties call a convention to organize a national Canadian labor party as soon as practicable.<sup>70</sup>

In 1920, with a part of the membership apparently exultant over the great successes that had met the efforts of the political labor organizations in most of the provinces, the executive council saw fit to sound a note of warning to the enthusiasts who saw in "the possible early rise to power of the Labor Political Party, an end to all necessity of continued legislative activity on the part of the Trades and Labor Congress, and the passing over of its functions to the Labor Political Party." It further reminded the convention that the latter organization was open to membership and largely supported by elements with little knowledge of unionism, and included in its ranks some who were bent on destroying the movement represented by the congress. While recommending, therefore, that the members of affiliated unions join and support the labor political party "as far as is allowed by their International Constitutions," it also recommended that all member organizations "pledge themselves to give loyal support

<sup>70</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-fourth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 36, 118. This action was not taken until 1921, when a conference of representatives of the various political organizations was held at Winnipeg. At this meeting it was decided to unify the political powers of all workers, hand and brain. For discussion of confused state of political labor parties in the country at this time, see *Eleventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 50-58.

to the legislative program laid down from year to year" at the annual conventions of the congress. Furthermore, it "reaffirmed the earlier decision of the congress that the funds of the latter should not be expended in making grants to any political party."<sup>71</sup>

Again in 1923, with the delegates assembled in the radical city of Vancouver, an attempt was made in a series of resolutions to have the congress take its stand more directly as a political body. With the western socialists again protesting, the convention indorsed its traditional policy, resolving that "labor political autonomy be left in the hands of the established political labor parties" and that the congress "continue to act as the legislative mouthpiece for organized labor . . . independent of any political organization" engaged in contesting seats in the legislature.<sup>72</sup> In 1925 in similar phraseology we have the latest refusal by Canada's leading labor body to mix trade unionism and politics.<sup>73</sup>

#### B. THE QUESTION OF INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

Although the Trades Congress, by virtue of its constitution and its association with the American Federation of Labor, as well as on account of the inclination of the majority of its mem-

<sup>71</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-sixth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 27, 90.

<sup>72</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 92, 94, 95, 99, 109.

<sup>73</sup> *Proceedings of the Forty-first Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 144. Labor met with considerable political success in the period immediately following the War. For the federal House, two of its candidates were successful in 1921, Mr. Irvine being elected in Calgary, and Mr. Woodsworth in Winnipeg. In both Ontario and Manitoba the legislatures, while predominantly representative of the farmers' parties, nevertheless contained many labor members. Three labor candidates also were elected in Nova Scotia. In the 1925 elections, while returning two regular party candidates and one standing for the Independent Labor Party of British Columbia to the federal House, labor failed to achieve the same successes in the field of provincial politics (see *Fifteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*).

bership, is a supporter of the principle of craft unionism, it has not maintained this faith during the last decade and a half without being uncomfortably reminded at various times of the presence within its ranks of a large dissenting element. The dissenters, although they have for many years had an active following in the Toronto Council, and recently among the Nova Scotia miners, have nevertheless always counted their greatest strength west of the Great Lakes, particularly among the miners, railway crafts, and machinists; and in such centers as Vancouver, Calgary, and Winnipeg.

What may be called the first event in a series of attempts to get a pronouncement from the congress in favor of industrial unionism as opposed to organization by craft occurred at the Calgary convention in 1911, when Victor Midgley, delegate from the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council, introduced the following resolution:

Whereas, craft unions have proved inadequate to successfully combat the present-day aggregations of capital; and whereas, the activities of the craft unions are almost entirely absorbed by jurisdictional disputes causing an internal warfare that prevents any continued successful co-operation among crafts in any given industry, Therefore, be it resolved that this convention indorse the principle of industrial unionism.<sup>74</sup>

That this motion was adopted in its original form by a vote of 70 in favor to 52 against, in spite of attempts to soften it by amendments, is scarcely to be taken as evidence that it was a true expression of labor opinion in Canada, inasmuch as the convention was overwhelmingly western in its make-up, more than 80 per cent of the delegates representing organizations west of Lake Superior. That it did fairly represent the views of the labor group of the West, however, rather than register the effects of contemporary foreign propaganda, is claimed for it in a supplementary resolution to the effect that the adoption of the fore-

<sup>74</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 73.

going measure was not intended in any sense to indorse "the organization known as the 'Industrial Workers of the World.'"<sup>75</sup> Its motivation came rather, it was argued, as may be inferred from the wording, from certain jurisdictional difficulties imposed upon the building trades in the western towns by disputes at the headquarters of the internationals, and from the long-standing antipathy to craft unionism on the part of radical groups in British Columbia.

The Calgary resolution was challenged at the 1912 convention, held at Guelph, Ontario, as an attack upon craft unionism and an attempt to direct the policy of affiliated unions. The committee on resolutions attempted to arrive at a compromise between the differing elements with the following recommendations: "That whereas, in the last year's resolution, there seems to be, in the minds of many members of trade unions, an attack on craft unions, be it resolved that this Congress express its strong sympathy with the policy of the international unions, but is of opinion that closer relations should exist between trades pending the amalgamation of all industrial units of industry."<sup>76</sup> After considerable debate upon the report of the committee, however, the 1911 resolution was allowed to stand, it being interpreted not as an attempt to direct the policy of craft unions, but as being "only of an educative, permissive nature."<sup>77</sup>

The second attempt, this time couched in the more positive terms of putting the question to an immediate referendum, came at the Quebec convention in 1918, the initiative being taken by the Winnipeg branches of the International Association of Machinists and the Trades and Labor Council of the same city. The consequences following upon this action are dealt with at length in chapter xi, and therefore may be passed with the reference.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>76</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 110.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

A third attempt was made at Vancouver in 1923 with a group of resolutions coming from the Vancouver Council, the Alberta Federation of Labor, the Edmonton Trades and Labor Council, and the Pattern-Makers' Association of Toronto. On this occasion the way of arriving at the desired condition was to be that of amalgamation, with the congress assisting in calling conferences of the various related craft organizations. The resolution of the Vancouver Council, which will serve as a sample of all, ran in part as follows:

. . . . Whereas, our unions are at present organized upon trade lines, each trade having separate agreements and working rules, thus making united resistance against the employers impossible, with the result that we are constantly suffering defeat, . . . . and whereas, the only solution for this situation is the creation of a united front of the workers by so amalgamating the various trade unions, that there will remain only one union for each industry on this continent; therefore, be it resolved that this Trades and Labor Congress of Canada endorses the principles of amalgamation as herein set forth, and that the executive be instructed to immediately endeavor to have the various international unions arrange a series of joint conferences for the purpose of uniting the present craft unions into powerful departmentalized industrial organizations, each of which shall cover an industry.<sup>78</sup>

As a substitute for this group of resolutions the committee on resolutions offered a measure declaring that "the Constitution of the Congress was drawn with the specific object of working in co-operation with the international trade unions on the American Continent" in which "autonomy in the industrial field is vested in the said international . . . . unions and the American Federation of Labor." It stated also that experience has shown that it is only by continuing in its former policy and in maintaining the present form of international unionism that it can hope to cope with organized capital; therefore resolved: "That the Trades and Labor Congress hereby reiterates its adhesion to the present form of organization, providing as it does

<sup>78</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 92.

the machinery for closer co-ordination of international craft unions which has worked so successfully in the past and been the means of very materially improving the wages and working conditions of the workers, not only in the Dominion of Canada but on the American Continent."<sup>79</sup>

A prolonged debate followed this recommendation, carrying over into a second session of the convention. In its course various charges and recriminations were indulged in, the one side averring the inability of the "stand-patters" to keep in touch with modern conditions, the other declaring that it was not the business of the congress to dictate to member bodies what their form of organization should be, and charging that the whole series of resolutions for which this measure was the substitute were a product of the Workers' Party, "the instrument of the Communists in Canada." When finally the division was called for, the committee's resolution carried by a vote of 101 to 58, the opposition being upheld by the major part of the delegates from Vancouver and New Westminster and receiving some support from Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, and Toronto.

Considering that the convention was held in Vancouver, and consequently was very largely western in its personnel, the result of this latest test would seem to indicate a cooling attitude toward industrial unionism, the explanation probably being in part that the subject has become associated more directly with radical movements.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>80</sup> Those who have followed the conventions of the American Federation of Labor and of several of the internationals—notably the machinists, railway shop crafts, typographers, and amalgamated clothing workers—for the past two years will realize that these amalgamation proposals at the Vancouver meeting of the congress were not new, but had been in the minds of a considerable section of the American labor world for some time. The resolutions handed in at Vancouver and the discussion which followed the report of the committee are much after the order of the corresponding activities relating to the matter at the 1922 convention of the American Federation of Labor. It should be noted also that the Montreal lodge of the International Association of Machinists attempted to

## C. THE MOVEMENT FOR JOINT INDUSTRIAL COUNCILS

In April, 1919, there was appointed by the Dominion government a body with investigation powers, known as the Industrial Relations Commission, to study the relationship between employers and workers throughout Canada and to report as to ways and means of bringing about better relations in industry. The personnel of this commission consisted of two representatives each of employers, labor, and the government, in addition to its chairman, Chief Justice Mathers of Winnipeg, labor's representatives being two members of the Congress' Executive Council. Following its report—which lacked unanimity, being divided into majority and minority findings—the Government took steps toward the convening of a National Industrial Conference to discuss further the industrial problems confronting the nation at that troubled period. This meeting, which continued over a space of several days during September, 1919, was carried out on a grand scale, labor being represented by sixty-

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get an indorsement for the amalgamation principle from the Montreal Trades Council earlier in 1923, but with indifferent results. The latest reaction of the railway machinists of Canada, as also of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees, is to preface the request for amalgamation with the demand for complete autonomy for the Canadian organized workers, and, in the case of the first named, to condition their demands for amalgamation with the semiskilled and weaker railway crafts by the requirement that amalgamation must first take place with not less than two of the brotherhoods. Among all the organizations in Canada the most advanced stand with regard to the subject has been taken in the railway shop crafts. At a conference at Montreal in January, 1923, they indorsed the plan for the amalgamation of the sixteen standard railroad unions as adopted a month earlier by the International Railroad Amalgamation Conference held in Chicago, and took steps for propaganda work and the calling of a convention later in the year. For general discussion, see *Twelfth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 211-16; *Thirteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 25-27, 196-200. The question has appeared again in a number of resolutions at the conventions of 1924 and 1925, these being sponsored in the latter year by the trades councils of Winnipeg, Vancouver, New Westminster, Halifax, Guelph, and Port Arthur, and by certain locals of the U.M.W.A. The congress in each case has reiterated its stand as taken in 1923 (see *Proceedings of Forty-first Annual Convention*, p. 142).

five delegates from the Trades Congress, six from the Railway Adjustment Board, and four from the Civil Service Federation, while the employers were represented by an equal number, as were also the provincial governments.

One of the recommendations offered by both commission and conference—and indeed, the outstanding one put forward by the latter—was for the establishment of “joint councils” among the various industries for the purpose of establishing closer relations between employer and worker and giving the latter a voice in management. The conference, moreover, suggested assistance by the government in the promotion of the plan. Subsequently the Dominion legislature voted \$15,000 for the purpose, to be expended under the direction of the Minister of Labor, and the latter appointed two special officers to carry on such work.

The earliest concrete results were in connection with the building trades. First, an industrial council was formed along the lines of the “Whitley plan” at Toronto between the Building Trades League of that city, on the one hand, and several building trades employers’ associations on the other. Then, in the spring of 1920, an invitation came to the executive of the congress from the Association of Canadian Building and Construction Industries, asking it to participate in a conference for the purpose of creating an industrial council for all Canada with jurisdiction covering the building trades. The congress’ executive referred the matter to the international unions affected, with the request that they authorize their Canadian representatives to give it their attention. At a meeting held in Hamilton between the two interests, with the president of the congress and a member of the employers’ group acting as joint chairmen, provisions were made for the appointment of a national joint conference board to be presided over by a chairman appointed by the Dominion Minister of Labor. Shortly afterward this board became a reality, operating under rules and by-laws laid down at a sub-

sequent meeting. Its functions, as set forth therein, were of an educational and advisory character, furnishing a common meeting ground for the discussion of questions affecting employers and workmen. Its powers were such as might be granted to it from time to time by its affiliates. One of its duties was to present to the government such proposals as might be requested by both groups, parties to the board, and to advise with its affiliates on measures considered to be of value to the building industry, such as technical education, apprenticeship system, the movement of labor, etc. It was also intended to encourage the organization of employers and workmen in the groups represented into local joint industrial boards to work in co-operation with itself for the settlement of disputes.<sup>81</sup>

Other joint industrial councils were under consideration during the fall of 1920, notably among the civil service employees, but subsequently enthusiasm over the whole movement waned. An insuperable difficulty lay in the different conceptions held by employers and employees as to the status of trade unions in the new alignment. In March, 1921, President Moore, in correspondence with one of the appointees of the government charged with promoting the formation of joint councils, made the following significant statement:

The establishment of joint industrial councils, if formed on the proper basis, will be of great value in promoting industrial harmony. I would, however, like to draw your attention to the debate which took place at the National Industrial Conference held in Ottawa, September, 1919, on the question. . . . You will note from the statements made by myself, and other labor representatives on that occasion, that there was a wide divergence of opinion between organized labor and the employers' representatives as to what would be a proper basis for the formation of such councils.

Briefly, organized labor is opposed to the formation of any council

<sup>81</sup> *Tenth Annual Report, Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 102; also *Proceedings of the Thirty-sixth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 71-74.

which will oppose or even ignore the existence of labor organizations and their elected representatives.<sup>82</sup>

After the discussion of this correspondence, supplemented by reports of various delegates relative to the operation of existing joint councils, the 1921 convention of the congress went on record "against the formation of these councils where they would be a substitute for trade unions."<sup>83</sup> A year later, at the Montreal meeting, a union of the civil service employees of Saskatchewan, referring to words of President Moore spoken at the National Industrial Conference in 1919 to the effect that "the establishment of such councils, with a full and free recognition of the trade union basis, would eliminate the larger percentage of trade disputes," asked that a report be submitted to the convention stating what efforts had been made by the congress to set up such bodies.<sup>84</sup> The resolution embodying this question, having been referred to the executive council, was answered in the latter's report at the Vancouver convention, the statement being that it (the council) reaffirmed "previous declarations in favor of the fullest development of industrial councils, as an effective measure towards educating workers in industrial management." It advanced the information that employers were not giving any co-operation at that time (1923), and that on this account no progress was being made in the establishment of these councils, but that, on the contrary, some previously existing had elapsed.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.

<sup>84</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 122.

<sup>85</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 49. An exception to this tendency toward secession has been the establishment in 1922 of a form of industrial joint council in the so-called Employees' Representatives Plan adopted in the plant of the British Empire Steel Corporation, Ltd., at Sydney. This provides that a central works committee, appointed by a popularly elected general works committee, shall meet with a similar group appointed by the corporation to deal with working conditions,

While, however, the industrial joint council idea seems to have disappointed the hopes of its promoters in Canada, so far as private industry is concerned—at least until employers and organized labor can agree upon what its application involves—it has persisted longer in favor among the civil service employees. A resolution at the 1922 convention of the congress by the Associated Federal Employees of Canada demanded a national joint council for the federal government service with departmental joint councils for the various departments, similar to the system adopted in the government service of the United Kingdom, and vested with authority to reorganize the work and personnel of the public services, to reclassify and simplify positions, and to provide a scale of salaries commensurate with services rendered. The 1923 convention of the congress pledged its fullest support to the campaign which the government employees were carrying on to bring such a system into operation.<sup>86</sup>

#### D. OPEN SHOPS MOVEMENTS, AND LABOR'S DEFENSE

Twice during the period here under discussion the congress has done battle with the organized employers on the question of the open shop. "Since President Roosevelt gave his pronouncement in the 'Miller Case,' " said President John Flett, in his address to the 1904 convention, "parrot-like, every employers' association, and others opposed to collective bargaining as between the employees and the employer, have been clamoring for the so-called open shop, and proclaiming themselves as champions of liberty."<sup>87</sup> The subject was given frequent reference at both

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working relations, etc. Cf. *Thirteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 194.

<sup>86</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 122; also *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 49.

<sup>87</sup> *Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 16.

the 1904 and 1905 conventions, it being remarked that the cities which were most insistent upon it were those strongly affected by the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. It is significant that this first open shop campaign, even as that of a more recent date, was accompanied by get-together meetings of employers and organized labor. Thus, at the 1904 convention of the congress a letter was read from the Manufacturers' Association purporting to be acting on a previous suggestion of the Toronto Trades and Labor Council and suggesting that the congress appoint a committee to meet with a similar committee representing itself for the purpose of considering questions whose discussion would result in mutual profit to both parties and redound to the country's welfare.<sup>88</sup> In 1906 we find the convention registering its moral support to the iron-molders, employees of the McLary Manufacturing Company of Toronto, who had been locked out by the latter in connection with its declaration for the open shop.<sup>89</sup> The second open shop drive was associated with the national reconstruction efforts following the war. It seems to have received its first recognition by organized labor as a nation-wide campaign amongst employers during the spring of 1920. At a special conference of accredited Canadian representatives of international unions held in May of that year under the auspices of the congress, a general warning was sounded to organized labor and a demand made for concentrated effort to meet the well-organized "attempt to undermine the trade unions." This attempt, according to the unanimous opinion of the conference, was taking many forms, among which the following were labeled as especially dangerous:

1. The insistence of some employers to have employees sign an individual contract form.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>89</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 78.

2. The introduction of profit-sharing schemes. . . . .
3. The introduction of group insurance, the fear of loss of which is causing some workers to repudiate their union affiliation during trade disputes.
4. The formation of welfare schemes and shop councils where workers are not given representation through their trade unions.<sup>90</sup>

The open shop movement seems to have reached its full strength in 1920, and thenceforward to have played a lessening part. The only references to it in later convention reports are in connection with its inroads on certain unions dependent largely upon the union label device, such as printing trades, cigar-makers' unions, boot and shoe organizations, garment workers, tailors, hatters, bakers, and unions of hotel and restaurant employees.<sup>91</sup>

#### E. UNION LABEL ACTIVITIES

Union label activities in Canada have had little to distinguish them from those carried on by the same labor organizations south of the border. There has been the same general type of endeavor to educate the consumer to a knowledge of the different labels, and the same struggle to obtain legislative protection against competing badges and marks sponsored by the manufacturers.<sup>92</sup> While union label leagues never seem to have made any progress in Canada comparable to that in the United States,

<sup>90</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-sixth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 70. Enthusiasm over joint industrial councils seems to have waned in labor circles after this disclosure, the workers turning again to their reliance upon an uncompromised business unionism.

<sup>91</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 207; *Proceedings of the Thirty-eighth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 152; *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 106.

<sup>92</sup> Such a measure passed the House of Commons in 1905, but was thrown out by the Senate. In 1919 a conference between interested trade unions and manufacturers was held under the auspices of the Department of Labor and general agreement was reached upon the legislation desirable, but up to date no bill has been introduced into Parliament. See *Canadian Congress Journal*, April, 1926.

trades and district councils have been busy with label propaganda, and the congress has sought to assist both by a considerable amount of attention given to the subject at its conventions and at times through its affiliations with such bodies as the Canadian Society of Equity.<sup>93</sup> At the Calgary convention in 1911, in order to arrive at a better co-ordinated and more effective policy with regard to the label, the congress made constitutional provision for a standing committee to deal with all resolutions and other matters bearing upon the subject and to report to the convention.<sup>94</sup> About the same time it indorsed the fifty-odd union labels and ten cards that were recognized by the American Federation of Labor, and in 1916 began to print each year on the cover of the convention report a list of the organizations whose labels and cards were indorsed by the Federation. The congress, however, has not seen fit to parallel, but rather to supplement, the work of the American body. In 1923 it refused to establish a union label advice service in connection with its executive work, contending that all necessary information and educational literature could be obtained from the union label department of the American Federation of Labor.<sup>95</sup> In general its work has been legislative and recommendatory. Under the latter term are included: (a) recommending or pledging delegates to patronize union marked goods, (b) pledging them to urge others to do the same, (c) recommending to trades councils and federal councils in all cities and towns to promote the use of union label articles, to encourage union label leagues, and above all to work to get dealers to carry union goods.

<sup>93</sup> A line of activity peculiar to the Canadian congress and its affiliates was its battle for a number of years prior to 1910 against the maple-leaf label of the Canadian Federation of Labor. Cf. *Proceedings of Twentieth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 29, and *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 72, 80.

<sup>94</sup> *Proceedings of the Twenty-seventh Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 93.

<sup>95</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 106.

At the 1918 convention the task was assigned to the congress of supplementing similar work of the trades councils by preparing a list of manufacturers who use union labels on their products, in order that they may recommend them to the dealers in their respective localities.

#### F. LABOR PRESS: CANADIAN CONGRESS JOURNAL AND OTHERS

Not until 1922 did the congress express its views through an official organ. Previous to this date, however, a number of weeklies of local circulation edited by certain of its officers or by men prominent at its conventions were active in publishing its opinions and reporting its operations. Among the more important of this group, the majority of which are still issued, should be named: (1) the *Industrial Banner*, a paper dating back into last century and long published at London from the hand of Joseph Marks, veteran unionist and creator of the organization known as the "Industrial Brotherhood."<sup>96</sup> In 1912 its office was moved to Toronto, where some years later Mr. Marks was succeeded as editor by James Simpson. In 1922 it was forced by financial difficulties to suspend publication; (2) the *Labor World* of Montreal, a bilingual paper edited by former Vice-President Gustav Francq; (3) the *Canadian Labor Press* of Ottawa, also bilingual, for some years the product of former Vice-President J. A. P. Haydon; (4) the *Labor Leader*, published at Toronto; (5) the *Western Labor News*, formerly published under the name of the *Voice*, by A. W. Puttee, M.P. It has long been the organ of the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council. (6) The *British Columbia Federationist*, of Vancouver, for many years the organ of the British Columbia Federation of Labor, edited by R. B. Pettipiece, socialist vice-president of the congress, then for a time by A. S. Wells, one of the One Big Union leaders, and more recently by George Bartley, of the British Columbia executive committee of the congress. Like the *Voice* of

<sup>96</sup> *Supra*, p. 55.

Winnipeg, its history has its interesting chapters connected with the activities of the One Big Union.

The present organ of the congress is the *Canadian Congress Journal*, a monthly magazine artistically designed and dedicated in large degree to instructing the membership with respect to the progress of measures entertained at the conventions, especially as these are given consideration in the various legislatures or as they express themselves in institutional creations. Leading articles in recent issues (1923-24) dealing with such topics as unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, workmen's compensation in Ontario, comparative child labor legislation in different provinces, the International Labor Organization, etc., have been frankly descriptive and educational. A feature noticeable in a large part of the Canadian labor press has been the relatively large place given to discussion of the political side of the British labor movement.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CANADIAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

There are in Canada four nationwide labor bodies: the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress, the Canadian Federation of Labor, the One Big Union, and the Federation of Catholic Workers of Canada. The present chapter is devoted to a discussion of the Canadian Federation of Labor.

#### I. ORGANIZATION, DEVELOPMENT, CHARACTERIZATION

The Canadian Federation of Labor was organized in Berlin, Ontario, in September, 1902, and was first known as the National Trades and Labor Congress. Its organization was caused in part by the action of the Trades and Labor Congress, which, in amending its constitution, excluded from representation Knights of Labor branches and national unions where internationals of the same craft existed; and in part by a desire on the part of its promoters to offer organized opposition to what they conceived to be an unwarranted attitude of the American Federation of Labor in maintaining a superior rather than a parallel jurisdiction to the Canadian Congress.<sup>1</sup> In his presidential address to the first annual convention, held at Quebec City in September, 1903, Mr. Omer Brunet remarked: "It should be well understood that in refusing to accept the flag of the American Federation, we had no desire to issue an ultimatum or to make a declaration of war. What we did desire, and what we still desire, was to affirm our national autonomy, not to change our allegiance, though keeping for our brother workmen on the other side of the line all the sympathies they deserve, and according to them on this side all the advantages which we consider as not prejudicial to the interests of Canada."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Labor Gazette*, III, 238.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 331.

Whatever may have been the attitude of its founders, however, as the years passed and it was faced with the problem of maintaining itself against the internationals with their larger resources and well-established machinery, the new congress soon became actively hostile to the main continental movement, emphasizing as the reason for its own existence the unpatriotic nature of the latter.

In its first constitution the new organization set forth its objects to be (1) the bringing together of all labor organizations of the Dominion, and (2) the organization of "national labor unions" throughout the country. While offering representation, however, to national trade-unions, trades councils, local unions, and district and local assemblies of the Knights of Labor, it barred all international unions. A resolution introduced at the 1903 convention to permit international labor organizations to affiliate, though giving cause to a prolonged debate, was finally rejected.<sup>3</sup>

The federation has had a following that has varied greatly from time to time in numbers, in geographical distribution, and in the nature of the trades from which it has been drawn. At the first regular annual convention held at Quebec City in the fall of 1903 it was announced that the membership was 7,000, found chiefly in Quebec but reaching into Ontario. The following year at the Ottawa meeting the report gave the number as 10,435, included in forty-seven branches. Nearly 9,000 of the members were located in Quebec, 5,000 being found in Quebec City alone. The remainder were mostly in Ontario, but two or three branches in far-off Victoria and Vancouver acknowledged allegiance.<sup>4</sup> The organization included at this time three city centrals, viz., the

<sup>3</sup> While it has made much of the concept of nationality, as opposed to internationalism, the National Trades Congress was not in its early years a purely Canadian body, but was constituted quite largely of Knights of Labor organizations. The change of name in 1908 was intended to mark the fact that it had become, for all practical purposes, exclusively Canadian.

<sup>4</sup> *Labor Gazette*, V, 361-65.

Central Trades and Labor Council of Montreal, the National Central Trades and Labor Council of Quebec, and the National Trades and Labor Council of Ottawa.

For a number of years, although the leaders looked toward extension into the Maritime Provinces (and, to that end, held their 1906 convention at St. John, New Brunswick, and that of the following year at Glace Bay, Nova Scotia) the membership of the organization centered in the three cities in which these trades councils were located. The National Council of Quebec, situated as it was at the seat of the provincial government, was a particularly potent force. In 1906 the membership was reported to be more than 20,000, gains having been made during the year largely at the expense of the internationals. In 1907, when the federation was making its bid for the affiliation of the Provincial Workmen's Association, the executive committee for Quebec declared Quebec City entirely organized—"the best organized city on the continent"—with joint committees operating in the various trades for the settlement of all difficulties by conciliation. Nevertheless the receipts for the year 1905-6 were only \$399.66, and it was admitted at the Glace Bay convention that lack of funds had prevented the executive council from travelling to Ottawa to interview the federal government. Of the thirty-six delegates at Glace Bay, sixteen were from Montreal, seventeen were from Quebec City, and three from St. John.<sup>5</sup> An indication of the Quebec flavor of the organization at this time was the addition of a constitutional provision calling for the appointment of an assistant secretary who should be French-speaking when the secretary-treasurer was English-speaking, and English-speaking when the reverse was the case; also a resolution ordering the report of the convention proceedings to be printed in the proportion of seven hundred French to three hundred English as against an equal ratio in former years.

From the point of view of distribution by industries the

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 432.

membership of the federation during these earlier years and down to 1910 was drawn in large measure from the shoe workers of Quebec and Montreal. Lesser support came from the long-shoremen of Quebec, the textile workers of Montreal, and the bricklayers' and masons' and carpenters' unions. At Ottawa, beginning in 1908, the lead was taken by the typographers who had recently seceded from the international and now, organized as the Canadian Typographical Union No. 1, had taken the field to set up a national typographical union as an effective rival and supplanter of the parent body.

The year 1910 was marked by several important developments. The first of these was the affiliation of the Provincial Workmen's Association, with upwards of 5,000 members; the second was the acquisition of two locals of the printing pressmen of Toronto; another was a marked activity in organizing and affiliating locals in the building trades. Following out certain recommendations of the convention of the previous year that had been embodied in the constitution, the executive had taken steps during the year for the formation of national unions into trade groups.<sup>6</sup> Four such groups were now under consideration: (1) the Shoe Workers and Allied Leather Trades Federation, (2) a national union of coal miners to be effected by extending the Provincial Workers' Association to cover all miners in Canada, (3) a building trades group, (4) a Canadian printing trades federation.

In outlining this plan of future organization, however, the promoters failed to take account of the materials with which they had to work. A special committee appointed to deal with the miners group reported that it was desirable to know more concerning the sentiment among the miners of the West before entering into any active campaign to create such a federation in this industry; while a second committee on the printing trades

<sup>6</sup> For constitutional amendments of 1909, see *Labor Gazette*, X, 472.

reported the conditions "not ripe" for action. The two other special committees recommended the formation as soon as possible of federations in the respective industries, the committee for the building trades being especially specific in marking out a program of organization.<sup>7</sup>

During the following year, however, difficulties arose between the federation and the shoe workers. At the 1911 convention it was reported that certain of these had severed their connection, and the executive committee of the federation had consequently withdrawn the privilege of the national label. For the time the organization appears to have lost its energies, so far as Quebec was concerned. From sixty-two delegates at the convention at Montreal in 1910 it dropped to a little more than half that number the following year. Of the thirty-nine delegates at the 1912 convention at Three Rivers, five were from the printers of Toronto, fourteen were from the Provincial Workmen's Association, and only one came from Montreal; while nineteen represented bricklayers, bakers, marine department workers, and general laborers of Quebec City. There were no shoe workers. This last condition stands in marked contrast to that at Montreal two years before, when sixteen delegates represented the shoe industry alone. At this time the leadership passed from the Quebec group, who up to now had shared it with a few aggressive men from Ottawa, and was taken by the grand officers of the Provincial Workmen's Association and delegates from Ontario. Soon after, however, Grand Secretary Moffatt of the P.W.A. dropped out of active participation in the affairs of the federation, and in 1917 (his organization having become identified with the United Mine Workers) was lost wholly to the Canadian body. For a time thereafter this latter body was directed entirely from Toronto, the pressmen and bookbinders of that city being mainly responsible for holding it together. In 1919 it num-

<sup>7</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XI, 441.

bered fourteen bodies in affiliation: thirteen in Ontario and one in Alberta.

Beginning with 1920 the federation has taken on a new lease of life, expanding not only in other cities in Ontario, but reasserting itself in Montreal and Quebec and making a creditable showing among the building trades of Calgary. The membership figures for the decade 1913-23 are as follows:

1913	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Unknown
1914	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7,252
1915	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7,028
1916	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7,609
1917	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3,421
1918	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,400
1919	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6,000
1920	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5,876
1921	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	8,250+
1922	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6,517
1923	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	17,447

Of the fifteen locals directly chartered and accounting for nearly 15,000 members in 1923, seven were in Ontario, five in Alberta, and three in Quebec.<sup>8</sup>

Coincident with changing membership has gone a shifting leadership. Its foremost spirit during the earlier years was Thomas J. Griffiths, of Montreal, who served as secretary-treasurer until 1908 and later as organizer. In 1908 J. W. Patterson, long prominent in union circles at Ottawa and hoping now to carry out with this machinery what he had failed to do with the parent body more than a decade before, took hold of the organization with considerable vigor, while George Mercure of the same city assumed the secretaryship. After Patterson came John Moffatt, of the Provincial Workmen's Association, and then for several years Charles G. Pepper, of Ottawa. Finally came the

<sup>8</sup> The report for 1925 shows three branches in British Columbia and one in Winnipeg, while only one remained in the province of Quebec. The total membership for 1925 is given as 13,560.

leadership of the Toronto printers, including James T. Gunn, M. F. Tumpane, and several others.

The question of an official journal has frequently been under consideration. For some years the lack was supplied by a part interest in an organ published by the Granite Workers' Union of Toronto. At another time it had some control over a paper called *Justice*, published in Montreal. At present its views are expressed by the *Canadian Trade Unionist*, published monthly at Toronto.

Throughout its history its organization work has been handicapped through lack of funds. A constitutional amendment was passed in 1908 providing for a paid organizer at a salary of \$800, but the funds not being forthcoming the clause was withdrawn, it being left to the chief executive to appoint particular organizers from time to time to act at strategic places. Early resolutions for setting up a special defense fund likewise failed of realization. The revenue has never been large: as against 1906, when it was less than \$400, it amounted to \$1,950 in 1910, \$1,640 in 1912, \$856 in 1915, \$5,012 in 1920, and \$2,520 in 1921. The chief expenditures have been for organization, printing, and salaries. At the present time the president is paid \$250, and the secretary-treasurer \$360, per year.

The federation has varied not only in the size and distribution of its membership from time to time, but also in the type of organizations upon which it has relied for its chief support. During its early years it issued charters only to local unions and to trades and labor councils. In 1910 it succeeded, after lengthy negotiations, in bringing the Provincial Workmen's Association into affiliation. About the same time, following out its ambition for the organization of different allied trades into groups, it was rewarded by receiving into affiliation the Canadian Federation of Shoe Workers, a printing-trades council, and the Canadian Federation of Bricklayers, Masons, and Plasterers, the first of which soon disappeared while the last has persisted as a small

organization down to the present. Vice-president Tumpane, at the 1915 convention, gave expression to a less thoroughgoing but probably more practical program than that of 1910 when he urged that especial efforts be made to bring in central labor bodies already existing, such as the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees, which, being already organized and self-supporting, would add more strength to the federation than the addition of a like number of members in local unions.<sup>9</sup> At that time, as a matter of fact, the Provincial Workmen's Association, with 5,500 members, the Canadian section of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, with 1,400, and the Canadian Union of Steam and Operating Engineers, with a following of 250, constituted more than 85 per cent of the membership of the Canadian Federation of Labor, the sixteen directly affiliated locals being responsible for less than one thousand members.<sup>10</sup>

This condition, however, was not to last. By 1918, with all three of these constituent central organizations fallen away, the federation was reduced to six directly affiliated local unions and two trades and labor councils. Since 1920, again, certain secondary bodies have been affiliated, the two of them remaining in 1923, viz., the Canadian Electrical Trade Union and the Canadian Federation of Bricklayers and Masons, accounting for 2,673 out of a total of 17,447 members. To these were added in 1925 the Amalgamated Carpenters of Canada, with eighteen local units.<sup>11</sup>

To sum up: the Canadian Federation of Labor, representing the purely national point of view, has varied in membership from

<sup>9</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XVI, 613.

<sup>10</sup> *Fifth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 187.

<sup>11</sup> A resolution, emanating from the National Trades Council of Calgary, was unanimously adopted at the 1923 convention, advocating the creation of a western subsidiary council for the purpose of routine business and organization. It also embodied the observation that an organizer conversant with western conditions, and financially supported, would bring great gains to the federation in the western field.

7,000 at its beginning to more than double that number in a few years; it dropped to 1,400 in 1918; and rose again to over 17,000 in 1923. At no time, therefore, has it numbered half of the purely national members of organized labor in Canada. In its early years its operations were confined chiefly to the province of Quebec and the district of Ottawa, but it soon began to have ambitions with respect to the Maritime Provinces, attempting first to plant its idea in New Brunswick, and then, more successfully, in Nova Scotia. Later it lost out in Quebec but expanded into Ontario, becoming almost wholly an English-speaking organization; still later it lost its Nova Scotia following, but made extensive gains in Alberta and reclaimed some of the lost ground in Quebec, though still hinging on Ontario and looking to Toronto for leadership. Industrially, its early reliance was largely upon the shoe trades, but after about a decade it lost their support and found its greatest membership among the miners. Later, these members being forfeited, it based its strength upon the printing, building, electrical, engineering, and street-car industries. It began its course with a composition of directly chartered locals and trades and labor councils. For a number of years it based its strength and its hopes upon affiliating secondary bodies, whether already established or manufactured to order along the lines of industrial or allied trades groupings; but in recent years it has returned for the most part of its first estate.

## II. ATTITUDES AND ACTIVITIES

The major assumption of the Canadian Federation of Labor is that Canadian workers must organize separately from the workers of other nations. The threat to the Canadian laborer comes not only from the capitalist in Canada, but also from the foreign capitalist and the foreign laborer, who respectively seek to exploit and to replace him in the production activities which should be his. Especially is it necessary, when he seeks to enlist the services of the various governments of the country in his pro-

tection, that he be not handicapped by having to appeal to them as a member of an organization largely foreign in character. The emphasis is placed upon political boundaries, and the purpose and the capacity of a nation's institutions to furnish protection to its own.<sup>12</sup>

With respect to methods, the federation has ever voiced its dependence upon constitutional weapons. A resolution was adopted in 1913 denouncing the methods of the I.W.W. as well as their object "in attempting to overthrow the present forms of society by creating a state of industrial anarchy." The convention placed itself on record as opposed to the methods of all such bodies and urged the various governments to prevent their establishment in Canada.

As regards its main purpose, viz., that of influencing legislation, the new organization provided in its constitution for practically the same operating machinery as its parent, the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, consisting of a general executive council, and an executive committee for each province, the latter to be headed by a vice-president. In practice, during the early

<sup>12</sup> In the preamble to its constitution, which was adopted at the convention of 1908 when the organization was given its present name, are the following statements:

"In studying the history of the present time, Canadian workers cannot fail to be impressed with the imperative necessity of protection, both in their relationship to capital in the hands of the organized employing class, and in the autocratic domination of trade-unionism and its policy exercised by the present system of internationalism.

"By the forming of the Canadian Federation of Labor we hereby declare that we fully realize the necessity of the Canadian workers organizing into Canadian national unions for the protection and promotion of their best interests, and this federation stands pledged to use every honorable effort in organizing Canadian labor along these lines, to the end that we may influence the various branches of government in support of such legislation as may be beneficial, and in securing the defeat of all laws opposed to the best interests of the industrial masses.

"We declare it to be in the best interests of Canadian labor to organize along national lines and thus foster the spirit of our Canadian nationality" (*Thirteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 44).

years the chief lobbying was done at Ottawa and Quebec, and later at these two centers and Toronto. Usually the other provincial committees have not been appointed at the conventions, it being left to the general executive to name them if occasion warranted.

In the debates of the earlier conventions an unusual amount of attention was given to tariff legislation, the resolutions being in the main concerned with changes in the duties on specific commodities and in protection of the employment of particular groups of workers. In contrast to the Canada Trades Congress the federation has in practically all cases requested higher protection. In 1903 and again in 1905 the executive urged upon the government a general upward revision of the tariff.

During the earlier years annual representations were made at Ottawa for an increase of the duty on shoes, the resolution of 1906 calling for 50 per cent ad valorem protection in place of the then existing 25 per cent. Other resolutions called for duties on barrels imported from the United States and on tweeds from England (1904), an increase in the duty on American vehicles (1907), etc. Beginning with 1906 the federation made for several years a consistent attempt to revive the decaying ship-building industry by means of a government bounty on all tonnage launched and by enlarging the dry-dock plant at Quebec. One sees an economic as well as a national interest on the part of at least a section of its membership in its enthusiastic support of the Laurier autonomous naval policy for Canada, with the ships to be built in Canadian yards. In the matter of coal duties the consuming interests in Quebec seem to have been counteracted by the producing interests in Nova Scotia, and no action was entertained.

Seeking to capitalize its purely Canadian composition, it has worked in various ways to bring discomfiture to the internationals. In 1903 it demanded recognition by the federal government as the only purely Canadian congress of workers in Canada.

Somewhat later it challenged the government's use of the label of the Allied Printing Trades' Council on government publications. In 1905 it sought the services of a government commission, to be appointed by the Quebec Chamber of Commerce, to settle the jurisdictional battle between the national and international masons in the French province. Previous to 1910 it gave encouragement to the various bills in the Dominion senate, directed against interference with Canadian workmen by foreign union leaders. It protested to the government of Alberta against the check-off system as insisted upon by the United Mine Workers in their trade agreements, and as early as 1920 it was seeking government assistance against the arrangements in certain Canadian shops, which, by virtue of the use of check-off systems, would not employ members of unions affiliated with the federation unless they agreed to pay dues to the international.<sup>13</sup>

In its representations to the federal government it has repeatedly insisted upon a rigid enforcement of the Alien Labor Law, and has been especially alert in calling the attention of the government to that particular brand of its infraction which involved the employment of American workers by American capitalists operating in Canada. It has stressed the need of remedies for false representations made abroad to immigrants, the desirability of old-age pensions, and above all, the extension of the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act to cover a larger number of industries. Of the various governments it has demanded greater facilities for technical and vocational education, the right of the federation to representation on government commissions, and workers' protective legislation of various kinds.

While the emphasis of the federation's activities has been directed toward influencing legislation, it has nevertheless given considerable attention to political action and to assisting member unions in the settlement of industrial disputes. In its first

<sup>13</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XX, 1211.

period of prosperity its executive committee for the province of Quebec, in particular, appears to have been active in both these types of endeavor, reporting to the 1906 convention that, in collaboration with the National Trades Council of Quebec City, it had succeeded in electing a member to the provincial legislature, in establishing ex-president Brunet as a member of the Quebec City municipal council, and in settling many labor difficulties.<sup>14</sup> The following year the president of the Central National Council of Quebec functioned as a member of a royal commission for investigating the causes of industrial disputes in the province.

Since the rise of the Ontario Labor Party the federation has repeatedly called upon its members to support its candidates, and in 1922 it pledged its support to the Canadian Labor Party, while recommending the development of provincial labor parties.<sup>15</sup>

The federation has always favored using as far as possible the machinery of conciliation and voluntary arbitration, and has given unhesitating indorsement to the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act. It has not been nerveless, however, in sensing abuses of the labor interest, and the tempo of its enthusiasm has increased and fallen somewhat in accordance with results obtained. Thus in 1904 and 1905, in connection with disputes in the shoe industry, it protested against the partiality of the Quebec, government-appointed board of arbitration. In 1908 we find it commending arbitration to the strikers of the Canadian Pacific Railway. In 1918 President Pepper asked the affiliated local unions to adopt every means provided by law for settling disputes, pointing out that the federation had always believed in conciliation and arbitration. A year later he referred again to the accomplishments in wages and hours secured to member unions by such means, but admitted that the limit of endurance was about reached, and legislation must be had to

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 402 ff.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, XXII, 1102.

remedy the causes of the increasing cost of living. In one instance only is there record given of the Canadian Federation extending financial assistance to a strike, the recipient being a Toronto boiler-makers' union in 1913.

What promised to be a very potent weapon in the hands of the federation, and what seems at one time to have visited more fear upon the internationals than any other activity of the new congress, was its plan for a national union label. At the first regular convention it was resolved to adopt a single label for all classes of goods manufactured by national unions, and the following year a resolution called for the formation of a national-label league to instruct the public to demand it when making purchases. In 1908 the executive committee reported the issuance of the national label to shoe factories during the year; but with the loss of the shoe workers the label seems to have been lost to the federation. In 1914 a new one was adopted and circulars were sent out to several boards of trade drawing attention to it and requesting support; but at the 1915 convention the secretary reported that it had not met with the success it merited.

Why has the Canadian Federation of Labor, placing itself as it did squarely upon the principle of nationalism, failed in a space of twenty years to be a potent force in the labor movement in Canada? The general reply given is that it has lacked money to compete with the organizing activities of the internationals. This, however, is scarcely to be taken as a final and sufficient answer, as it always suggests a further "Why?" An explanation coming from one who was familiar with the operations of the federation in pre-war days is that it drew its support from a weak membership, unappreciative of the benefits of united action and unwilling for the most part to shoulder the responsibilities and make the sacrifices involved in courageous union policy. Historically Quebec has lagged behind Ontario and the West in the practice of vital unionism, and it was upon Quebec, as we

have seen, that the federation chiefly depended. Still another explanation is reflected in the convention reports which show that, until recently, an undue proportion of time was spent in discussing political questions concerning labor only indirectly. A final explanation is found in the fact that the alliance between Quebec and Nova Scotia was an ill-starred arrangement. What the Provincial Workmen's Association needed, above all, was industrial support against the great company which since 1902 had become the employer of the majority of its members; but the relationship with French workers lacking industrial affinity offered little such support. In the legislative field, again, one of its chief interests was in maintaining duties on coal, in which naturally it could expect no support from a province whose prosperity depended upon securing that commodity at low prices. Nevertheless, as expressed by President S. B. McNeill of the miners in 1913, the Nova Scotians would have rallied to the federation with enthusiasm had the large centers in the upper provinces shown more faith in it. The present boom under Toronto guidance and with Alberta support may well result in a larger success than has characterized this organization in the past.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE FEDERATION OF CATHOLIC WORKERS OF CANADA

#### I. THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC MOVEMENT

The population of the Province of Quebec in 1921 was 2,361,199, being divided almost equally between the rural and urban categories. And of the cities, Montreal is accredited with 618,506 and Quebec with 95,193, the two contributing more than half the urban population; no others reach the 35,000 mark. More than 80 per cent of the people are French-speaking and these are solidly Catholic in religion. In fact, 86.2 per cent of the total population are said to belong to that faith.<sup>1</sup> The total membership of organized labor for the province is probably in the vicinity of 90,000. Of these, upward of 30,000 are claimed by the National Catholic movement.

This organization draws its greatest membership from the leather, building, and textile trades, the pulp and paper industry, and from among store and office clerks and general laborers. Its claim to numerical greatness in the past has rested largely on its membership in Quebec City and a few lesser centers—notably Three Rivers and Hull—rather than on Montreal, which has been for many years a stronghold of the internationals. Quebec in particular, with its traditions of trade-unionism dating well back into the nineteenth century, but with its local unions for the most part floating free of all outside affiliations after the decadence in the province of the Canadian Federation of Labor following 1910, and with its solid French population and Catholicism, has been called “the rock” of Catholic union-

<sup>1</sup> *Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science* (May, 1923), p. 12.

ism in Canada. Recently, however, large gains have been made in Montreal, Lachine, and Sherbrooke. In 1923 Montreal made a showing of twenty-six unions and research clubs united in a central council, as compared with twenty-seven and a central body in Quebec.

Consideration must also be given to the institutional conditions and mental attitudes of the people of French Canada. While industrialism has not passed them by, probably less change—speaking in spiritual as well as in material terms—has visited them since colonial days than has come to any of the long-settled European stocks in America. Although greatly in the majority and constituting the chief labor supply, they control no more than 10 per cent of the industry of the province. Isolated as they are from outside contacts by the barrier of language, reading a press that nurtures their own point of view and tradition, and above all devoted and subservient to a church that controls the education of the majority and practices an unparalleled paternalism on both youth and mature, these people present an unusual problem to the labor organizer. They are fearful of radicalism because it is opposed to Christian doctrine; they turn away from the internationals because the contact would endanger their French language and traditions; they are not class conscious; they talk the language of absolutes in all matters of principle, and nothing less will suffice.

Another factor to be noted is the relative immobility of the labor supply in the greater part of the province. The family as an institution is well guarded by the church, and is to a much larger degree than in English-speaking Canada and the United States the economic unit. It is said to be a common thing for a man and four or five of his sons to be working at the same mill or factory. The father will have been a steady employee for a generation. One firm gives the average term of service of its present working force as eighteen years. Normally the French-Canadian worker has not traveled; nor does he concern himself

much about comparisons with conditions elsewhere. He and his family are known to the employer and to the parish and have a working reputation to sustain. Employer, family, church affiliation—each in its own way makes its demand upon his loyalty, and all unite in creating the final result, a conservative, immobile worker.<sup>2</sup>

The National Catholic movement made its beginning partly in ground already organized, and partly in virgin soil. Historically, the majority of the independent labor units in Canada have been located in the province of Quebec, and this condition was accentuated by the action of the Trades Congress in 1902, whose constitutional amendment at that time not only denied recognition to national unions where international organizations of the same craft existed, but also deprived the national local bodies from representation on trades councils chartered by the congress. In both Quebec and Montreal these independent units, thus barred from the international local councils, formed city centrals of their own to deal with such matters as usually come within the purview of these bodies. The Montreal council did not flourish for any length of time; but that of Quebec, with its larger measure of freedom from outside influence, continued to function either as an independent or in affiliation with the Canadian Federation of Labor until events in connection with

<sup>2</sup> An instance in point, of recent date, is the reported failure of the Montreal Typographical Union to persuade its unemployed French members to take work where opportunity offered in the United States. It is true that a surplus of the Quebec youth has gone in the past in great numbers to New England and the North-Central states as well as into Ontario and the Canadian West; but relatively speaking it has been an overflow, natural in view of the relatively backward industrial organization, rather than a matter of ebb and flow turning with each shift in the locus of industrial prosperity. From 1910 to 1922 this emigration largely ceased, but has since become accelerated. For the general argument that the French are less migratory than other Canadians, see article by Professor G. E. Jackson, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, May, 1923.

the rise of the Catholic organization brought it into a more vital relation with other labor bodies in the province.

The first event bearing on the history of Catholic unionism happened in Quebec City in 1900, in which year there was a strike and lockout in the boot and shoe industry. The trouble is said to have arisen chiefly through the demand made by the employers upon their workers to separate themselves from all professional associations.<sup>3</sup> The conflict lasted from October 25 to December 10, and involved twenty-two manufacturers and 3,850 workmen. Finally Monseigneur Begin, archbishop of Quebec, whose name is ever held in esteem by Catholic syndicalists, was invited by the contestants to act as arbitrator. Being greatly interested in the relation of labor and capital, the prelate gladly set himself to the task.<sup>4</sup> In his decision, which he based upon the instructions in *L'Encyclique Rerum Novarum* (1891), of Pope Leo XIII, the great fundamental document for Catholics in labor matters, he laid it down that while workers have a natural right to form associations, such associations are only legitimate when they propose an end that is honest and just and when they employ, in order to bring it about, means that conform to morality, honesty, and justice. In the present case, after an examination of the constitutions and rules of three of the unions, he found he could not give them his approval without their undergoing a certain number of modifications: "If the articles and the clauses which I find reprehensible were put into execution literally, just as they are drafted, it is certain that they would involve in many cases severe damages to personal liberty, to liberty of conscience, and to justice," he wrote in condemnation.<sup>5</sup> The result was that the unions in question<sup>6</sup> had their constitutions and rules changed to square with the social directions laid down in

<sup>3</sup> *Labor Gazette*, I, 134, 153, 229.

<sup>4</sup> *Programme—Souvenir du Premier Congress*, 1922, p. 32.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>6</sup> *Labor Gazette*, I, 296.

the *Encyclical*. Further, the unions consented to have an almoner named by religious authority, with the right to take part in their counsels and assist when he might judge it proper at their meetings.

At this early date, then, these groups accepted two features fundamental to Catholic unionism; viz., the necessity of having their principles conform to those of the church, and the recognition of the church's right to be represented on all occasions to see that nothing adverse to those principles shall be entertained. On the other hand, there was not introduced at this time any deliberately exclusive factor: "They recruited indifferently among Catholics and Protestants"; nor do they seem to have carried on any campaign for the immediate extension of their numbers. As Eugène Lapointe has said: ". . . the ground was evidently not yet ready for an action more decisive and more extended. Before laying the foundations of a trade-union organization proper, it was judged necessary first to prepare the minds to receive the seed *de la doctrine syndicale confessionnelle* by an active and adroit propaganda." We have no records of means adopted nor of results coming from this propaganda for some years. Meanwhile the scene shifts to another field.

Pure Catholic syndicalism in Canada may be said to date from the action of the Federation Ouvrière de Chicoutimi in 1912. Up to that time while there had been national unions (as opposed to international) composed of Catholic workers, none had formally repudiated the principle of religious neutrality. This result was first to be accomplished by the pulp workers of Chicoutimi.

Concerning beginnings among these workers, we are told by Father Lapointe, in his historical letter to the 1922 convention, how one finds in their first constitution (1907) "that they adopted the principles and the practical rules which are the basis of the constitutions and regulations of all the Catholic syndicates established since then in the province, viz., repudiation of

the false principle of conflict of classes, the practice of justice and charity in dealings with employers, regulation of disputes by recourse to arbitration. . . .”<sup>7</sup>

The same writer further relates that when the pulp industry first established itself in the Saguenay country it was welcomed by the inhabitants for the economic benefits that it was expected to bring, but it was feared (at least by the religious leaders) for the effects that industrialization would inflict upon the workers. Moreover, they knew “intuitively” that the industry itself was doomed to failure if the work in the mills was not “freed from the tyranny of a powerful foreign leadership.” “For the ‘International’ was already implanted in Saguenay.” The workers, however, were very ignorant and indifferent to the dangers. The mass of them knew nothing of “the doctrine so luminously explained in *L’encyclique Rerum Novarum*.” Temperamentally and customarily they were opposed to discipline. They were individualists, these men of the forest, quite lacking in any *esprit de corps*. Moreover, “no more than others elsewhere were they disposed to admit the interference of the priest in questions which to their eyes were purely material, the moral side of which escaped them, and for the regulation of which they did not recognize any power competent. This was complicated again by the idea generally held, although not always expressed, that the priest, in case of conflict between the worker and the employer, would be naturally on the side of the latter.” In fact “the mass of prejudice was enormous, and there was much distrust.”

With human material of this kind it was natural that the newly founded union was not a success. For five years it existed with a very limited membership (*une élite*). “This was a period of study, of gropings and ventures more or less happy.” The union started a paper, but was forced to suspend its issue. It tried economic experiments, but none of them was markedly successful. It was not until it had ceased to take in “honorary

<sup>7</sup> *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 43.

members" and had come out in its true colors, exclusively Catholic and national, that it experienced any prosperity. With the suppression of the honorary (Protestant) members in 1912 the battle was on. The workers were compelled to make a choice. The weapons of the Catholic union were too powerful, and soon it remained master of the field.

Chicoutimi was thus in a true sense the pioneer. The experiment in molding and organizing, sponsored by the church and carried through among the pulp workers of the distant North by a small body of *élite*, furnished both precedent and stimulus for the rapid spread of the movement in other places.

There is no occasion to go into details of the beginnings in all the districts. As at Quebec and Chicoutimi, so it was elsewhere. There was (1) a period devoted to preparation, carried on through instruction, largely by church authorities, in the religious, patriotic, and professional responsibilities of the workers; and (2) a period of organization in which in most cases the field was contested by international organizers. At Three Rivers organization followed on a series of lectures and conferences given during the autumn of 1912 by Bishop Cloutier, in which he explained the requirements of the church in labor matters. La Corporation Ouvrière Catholique was launched on the Sunday closing the series. Member unions were told off by trades out of the names handed in at that meeting.

The Catholic union at Thetford Mines was founded in 1915 after a hard contest with the Western Federation of Miners. L'Union Nationale des Ouvriers de la Rive Sud, the organization among the ship-builders of the Davies Company, was a pick up from the Canadian Federation of Labor. These workers, rebelling against the taxes demanded by the parent organization, asked the Catholic Union of Quebec to send in an almoner. The latter responded, but not before the international had organizers on the ground. Strikes, alleged by the Catholic union to have been fomented by the international, led to the appointment

of a royal commission of inquiry. The outcome was that the company signed trade agreements with the Catholic unions in two of its factories, granting to them the "closed shop."

At Sherbrooke the invasion of the labor field by the international organizers in 1917 led the Catholics to take action. The Bishop appointed an abbé to the work of preparation, and by the summer of 1919 four locals were organized. In the diocese of Granby time would not permit of a lengthy tutorial process. Hearing of the arrival, during the previous week, of international organizers, of their activities among the rubber and tobacco and wood workers, and of their efforts to bring on a strike of the first-named in sympathy with the rubber workers of Montreal, the Catholic leaders commenced instructions on Sunday, June 15, 1919, on the comparative religious, social, and moral merits of the rival organizations, and the same evening, after an address by Abbé Edmund Hébert, of Montreal, the foundations of the Corporation Ouvrière Catholique de Granby were laid. The strike was frustrated and the enemy foiled in his efforts to get a foothold.<sup>8</sup> At St. Hyacinthe and Lachine there was again in each case the spur of rivalry and as elsewhere the same story of devoted leadership and instruction by clergy and laymen in their effort to interest and hold the rank and file. In one or two cases employers, desirous no doubt to provide the internationals with a worthy rival, have been instrumental in bringing in the Catholic union.

Hull, which is now in point of numbers the third center of importance, presents something of an exception. Here lay leaders, discontented with the activities of the international unions in the pulp and paper industries, began laying the foundations as early as 1912, whereas no almoner was appointed until some four or five years later. This was probably the only case where the professional preparation ran ahead of the patriotic and the religious.

<sup>8</sup> *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 63.

Coming to the large centers, Quebec and Montreal, a word added to what has already been said will suffice for the former. After the ruling by the Archbishop which led to the earlier mentioned constitutional changes by these unions, we have little record for some time. But presently a campaign of education and propaganda was entered upon by *L'Action Sociale Catholique*, a leading city daily, under the auspices of Archbishop Roy, the avowed object being "to implant Catholic unionism among the workers of the city and district of Quebec."<sup>9</sup> Connected with *L'Action Sociale Catholique* was a department entitled La Commission des Questions Ouvrières, under the inspiration and leadership of which a "circle of study" was developed during the war years. By 1918 the latter had grown to include some sixty operative members. The way of conversion was by pious study, issuing finally into proselytism which carried rapidly among the workers, and soon a great many of the syndicate had declared for the faith and asked for the services of a chaplain. Today Catholic syndicalism occupies a comparatively solid position in the city and district, having established a long lead over internationalists and other bodies. Much credit for the success of the campaign is given to Abbé Maxime Fortin, the present active chaplain of the Federation and editor of *Le Travailleur*.

In 1918 there was established the National Central Trades and Labor Council of the District of Quebec. It is an amalgamation of two national councils, one of which dates back to 1890. It numbers some twenty-seven syndicates in affiliation. It itself is the largest affiliate of the Federation.

There was also formed May 1, 1920, a secretariat of the Catholic syndicates for the district, instituted by the religious authorities of the diocese for the purpose of providing the unions with a center of information. Included among its functions are (1) publication of a weekly newspaper and bulletins for the

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

syndicates, (2) giving courses in political and social economy, (3) aiding in the work of union organization and in the formation of consumer's co-operatives. It also provides members with free legal advice and medical service. The president of the Catholic Federation occupies offices at the secretariat headquarters and from here also issues the official organ.<sup>10</sup>

The organizers in Montreal had to deal with a situation quite different from that in other parts of the province. Here the forces of the other race come into action at the hands of business leaders, educators, preachers, entertainers. In Montreal, moreover, the Catholic church does not hold the same undisputed sway over the entire life of the French people. It is true that the great majority of the people are Catholic, but it is a Catholicism modified by its touch with English-speaking America. In the clash of opposing mental attitudes the Catholic extremist has had to yield in many places to that philosophy which would limit the function of the clergy to what is held (beyond Quebec) to be the spiritual side of life. The Catholic worker of the internationalist group, which is strong in Montreal, when challenged for failure to read aright the papal exhortations to form exclusive unions, replies by reference to the writings of other high dignitaries of the church who take quite a different attitude toward what should be the proper method of organization among Catholic workers, and also by calling attention to the modern history of France, with its account of drastic limitation of the field of papal authority. Not the least of the forces which are today contesting the applicability of church principles to the more worldly realm is this larger branch of unionism. The business of "preparing the soil" for the seed of the Catholic social doctrine

<sup>10</sup> *Tenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 45. It is announced on p. 58 of the thirteenth annual report that the official organ, *Le Travailleur*, had seen fit, on account of falling returns, to cease publication beginning August, 1923, for the remainder of the year.

was a matter somewhat different in Montreal from what it was in the more remote parts of the province.

The story is quite lengthy and complicated, but may be sketched to some advantage by reference to a few of its leading features. The earliest influence that is cited by the historian as having a bearing on the movement, and one that has continued to operate, came from the inauguration by Archbishop Bruchési, in 1900, of a religious labor festival on the first Sunday in September when each year all the Catholic workers of the city are invited to Notre Dame Church to hear the thought of the church upon the social question.<sup>11</sup> The next happened in 1908, when at the interdiocesan social reunion held at Laval University, Reverend Father Lapointe, of Chicoutimi, and Abbé Cloutier brought word of the movement in the Saguenay country and at Three Rivers. Arising out of this reunion a study was made of the conditions of Catholic workers, and, as a result of the discovery of socialistic ideas among them, a society was founded largely to look after their moral condition.

But certain leaders, notably Father Hudon and Abbé E. Hébert, were not satisfied with this program. They wanted something more positive and progressive. Having secured the support of Archbishop Roy, they started a "cercle d'études sociales." Here were carried on discussions devoted to the workers' social education. Papers were presented from time to time by the leaders on such subjects as the right of property, the labor contract, the strike, or the rôle of the state in the social question.

In 1911 there was founded by a group of leading priests and laymen a more aggressive organization: L'École Sociale Populaire. This functioned through four parts: a committee of studies, a committee of organization, a committee of propaganda, and a committee of finance. For a time it was the center of Catholic

<sup>11</sup> G. Tremblay, *Programme—Souvenir*, p. 19.

labor activities, but after 1914 it seems to have become a center of studies and propaganda only, while active organization was given over to the "committee of the diocese." Up to this time no union had been established in Montreal. The preparatory period was thus extensive, and moreover the preparation by no means ceased with the organization of the first unions. But it was now judged that the time was ripe to begin organization.

As a supplement to the event it was thought wise to bring some powerful influence from outside to awaken public opinion. Appeal was made to *L'Action Populaire* of Rheims, France, a paper that had voiced the aims of the Christian workers in Europe, to send a lecturer. The result was the arrival of Father Plantier, who delivered a series of lectures, some addressed to the clergy, some to the professional class, many to the workers, and others to the general public. Immediately at the close of the series organization began. A federation was formed comprised of two syndicates of mixed tradesmen, to each of which was assigned an almoner. Then a professional syndicate was formed consisting of store, office, and bank clerks. As a recognition of the importance of the labor question in Montreal, just previous to the war Archbishop Bruchési detailed three of the leading clergy to devote their energies entirely to the work of the Catholic syndicates.

An important step in the progress of Catholic unionism in Montreal was the founding in June, 1918, by Abbé Hébert, in concert with an understanding arrived at at the general church reunion held at the Villa St. Martin that year, of the Cercle Léo XIII, which from then on was the center of studies and the promoter of the organizing work in the city. It has as the objective of its studies "the formation of an educated worker, capable of *taking on himself* the direction of the Catholic worker's movement." The program of studies includes (1) courses in sociology, (2) studies having as their purpose "to become acquainted with the international unions in all their aspects," (3) a worker's

chronicle dealing with the principal events of interest to labor during the current week.<sup>12</sup>

Another buttress to Catholic unionism in Montreal was afforded by the establishment in July, 1920, of a secretariat for the district which serves as a basis of operations for the district organizer and as a center of propaganda and of information. A few months after its creation it carried through the distribution of 250,000 tracts.<sup>13</sup> It has been instrumental in obtaining for the movement an agreeable publicity in the press of Montreal. It also serves as an exclusive employment agency for Catholic unionists.

The story of the movement in Montreal shows that the pathway has not been smooth. Opposition to priestly interference was very prevalent at first, but is said to have disappeared.<sup>14</sup> Organization has not been spontaneous, but has been the result of continuous application and devotion on the part of the leaders. In spite of the efforts at thorough preparation, aiming to "fortify the convictions of the members," one reads of "neuter" factions appearing within the established unions and causing them to fall away from the faith. The ideal of the Cercle Léo XIII of making the workers capable of assuming the direction of their own organization does not seem, as yet, to have been realized. In addition to providing leaders from its own ranks, the church still pays in part the salaries of the lay organizers. Of these there were two appointed in 1919, one devoting his time to

<sup>12</sup> G. Tremblay, *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 25.

<sup>13</sup> These tracts consisted of a series of twenty-five. They are to a large extent an elaboration of quotations from papal letters and utterances of notable church authorities, but some of them attempt more independently to outline the position of Catholic unionism and to set forth its advantages. Each one follows its argument with an appeal to "join the Catholic syndicate." The authorship is almost evenly divided between church and lay writers. For a complete list of titles and authors, *Eleventh Annual Report of Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 25. The tracts have been translated at the Department of Labor, Ottawa.

<sup>14</sup> *Programme—Souvenir* (1922).

the building trades, the other to the store and factory workers, and since then others have been added. The hardest field for the Catholic unions to get a foothold in has been the building trades, and it is here too, for strategic reasons, that they are most desirous of securing a following. They have, however, succeeded in organizing syndicates among the plumbers, painters, and carpenters, and have found it convenient to form a building-trades council. During 1923 they also made considerable inroads in the printing trades, being favored in this by the strike of the International Typographical Union. On the other hand it is to be said that Catholic unionism has won favor with employers generally, whether Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish. There have been instances in fact where it has been accorded preferential treatment. It has won its membership largely from the internationals, which had the advantage of being already established, and it faces the future with a capable organization as well as a corps of devoted leaders.<sup>15</sup>

Although Catholic unionism was distinguished from its beginnings by the activities of central organizing bodies at Chicoutimi and Three Rivers, it is only in its later history that it has shown an effort to bring the local federations into closer relations, with the idea of developing some unity of action in those phases of syndicalist endeavor that concerned all the workers. It is perhaps fair to say that the movement toward co-ordination began with the creation of the National Central Trades Council in Quebec City in 1918. Subsequently central councils were formed in other districts, and in September of the same year a conference for the whole province was called at Quebec. This meeting proved to be the forerunner of an annual convention. The figures in Table I indicate the numerical importance of these meetings.

As the figures in the table indicate, the variation during the

<sup>15</sup> The effective membership of the Catholic unions in the city was reported to be 6,000 in the summer of 1922.

six-year period has been considerable. The 1923 figure of 30,000 is explained by the secretaries as due to unemployment resulting in inability of many members to keep their dues paid up. As a matter of fact the figures in columns 3 and 4 are deceiving inasmuch as the falling off in both delegates and syndicates represented is explained by the grouping of the locals into lesser federations.

At the second of these conferences, held at Three Rivers, the project of forming a federation of the whole was brought forth and favorably considered, and the following year the executive

TABLE I

Year	Meeting Place	Number of Delegates	Syndicates Represented	Membership Claimed
1918.....	Quebec	.....	27 (out of 41)	.....
1919.....	Three Rivers	123	63	31,000
1920.....	Chicoutimi	225	120	40,000
1921.....	Hull	200	89	45,000
1922.....	Montreal	109	80	40,000
†1923.....	Quebec	116	88	30,000

officers were instructed to prepare a constitution and by-laws to be submitted at the 1921 convention, certificates of affiliation being granted in the meantime to such as desired connection and had the recommendation of the general chaplain of the district where the applicant had its head office. As a result a draft constitution for a permanent organization was duly presented and adopted at the Hull convention, the principles of the new body being referred to the religious authorities for preparation. The full text of principles and laws became effective January 1, 1922, and the tentative movement toward federation became an accomplished fact. The federation itself, as compared with other federal bodies in Canada, has shown remarkable success in issuing charters to such organizations as are eligible. Today it covers practically the whole territory of Catholic unionism.

## II. THE FEDERATION AS COMPLETED IN 1922

The aim of the new federation, as set out in chapter ii of the constitution, is "to promote and safeguard the general interests of Catholic workers in Canada," and, looking to that end, "to create and maintain in this country a concerted movement of Catholic syndicalism, which, while allowing the various groups their autonomy, would bind them by federation bonds, permitting to defend and develop in common the professional, economic, patriotic, and religious interests of Catholic workers in Canada."<sup>16</sup>

As with other bodies of a similar nature, the greater part of the time in convention is taken up with hearing reports of the various committees and with the passage of resolutions looking to the welfare of the movement. While the latter have chiefly to do with the usual problems of labor conventions, nevertheless the procedure and accomplishments of the Catholic congresses reflect the spirit and purpose of the movement. Sunday Mass and religious receptions are an integral part of the program; the apostolic benediction of the Pope is received; invitations are extended to religious as well as to governmental authorities to be present at the meeting.<sup>17</sup>

The National Catholic movement avowedly stands for trade-unionism as opposed to union by industry. Nevertheless there is some compromise, as in cases of department stores and asbestos mines.<sup>18</sup> The scheme of organization is as follows:

1. The unit of organization is the local syndicate. But in addition there are, as auxiliary to the locals and representative of

<sup>16</sup> *Eleventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 28.

<sup>17</sup> Some twenty almoners, in addition to the chaplain of the convention, were in attendance at Montreal in 1922.

<sup>18</sup> Where organization is by firms, a syndicate being formed to include the workers of one employer, it is often as a concession to those employers who refuse to have dealings with "foreign unions."

the educational side of the movement, a few research clubs which also rank as primary in the system of organization.

2. These basic units in turn are either organized or in process of organization into (*a*) professional or trade federations, (*b*) regional unions of syndicates, (*c*) the Federation of Workmen's Research Clubs.

3. The supreme unit is the Federation.

Eventually the scheme of organization calls for the secondary units (as found under 2, foregoing) to have membership in the federation; but at present, by necessity, some of the locals must be admitted directly. When proper secondary units shall have been established in their district, however, the locals are compelled to join them and thus accept indirect membership with the main body. Failure to conform to this requirement within three months results in loss of charter. The boundaries of the earlier regions have usually been set by the unions themselves, following from natural causes; but where the district is created previous to the existence of any syndicates, as is often the case under the method of formal organization, they are set by the federal bureau.

Although considerable encouragement has been given from the top, organization into professional and trade federations has not proceeded far. During 1923, however, six syndicates of pulp workers were organized into the Catholic Federation of Pulp and Paper Factory Employees. It has a salaried organizer for all Canada and various district organizers. The national is supported by a 10-cent tax on each member, payable every six months.

The Federation of Catholic Workers of Canada itself functions through (*a*) its annual congresses, (*b*) its federal bureau, (*c*) its executive officers acting individually.

The congresses are composed of delegates from the secondary federations and (provisionally) representatives from the locals who hold no membership in the latter. Regional federations send two delegates each; trade federations of less than 1,000

members send one; those of more than 1,000 are entitled to an extra delegate for each additional thousand or fraction thereof; research clubs send one each. Each delegate is entitled to one vote. Any priest duly appointed to the position of chaplain to any of the organizations affiliated with the federation has the right, as such, to attend the congresses and to take part in the deliberations; but he has no voting rights. The federation has also a general chaplain who, in addition, may attend any committee of the congress and in general occupies the same position with respect to the federation as the lesser chaplains do to the locals. In their operations the congresses depend upon the committee system, each committee being provided with a chaplain. All resolutions, other than those which are made exceptions by a two-thirds vote of the whole body, must be submitted to the secretary sixty days prior to the opening of a congress in order that they may be distributed to the syndicates in printed form thirty days previous to the meeting.

The federal bureau is appointed each year by the congress and consists of the executive officers, viz., president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, assisted by the general chaplain. Its duties are to apply the decisions of the congress and carry out the intent of that body. It meets every three months and as much oftener as the interests of the federation may require. More specifically, it keeps in touch with the member groups by the use of bulletins and questionnaires; it carries out the will of congress with respect to influencing legislation at the several centers of government; it lends itself to organization endeavor, giving special attention to the forming of secondary units, which in turn are responsible for organizing locals; it appoints organizers and propagandists and accounts for the fund voted by the congress for such purposes; and finally it decides, in a space not exceeding twenty days after application, on whether or not the federation shall support a local syndicate that requests its assistance in professional disputes. In regard to this last matter, if the local

making such application calls a strike in the meantime before the answer is given, it relinquishes all claims to assistance.

An examination of the resolutions and discussions of the conventions of the federation shows that a very large part of their time is devoted to measures looking to the alleviation of the worker's condition through legislative means, the greater portion of it being directed toward the provincial government. The federal bureau on occasion waits on the various governments in a body.

The national professional federations hold annual conventions and discuss the labor policies of their trades. They have their national organizers who co-operate with the district organizers. Important dealings with employers, such as forming trade agreements, are carried on by the national officers working with the district officers. These national bodies are the initiators of strike proceedings by any group of their members, and lend financial support. But first every proposed strike must have the indorsement of the federation. With regard to syndicates which have no national trade affiliation, the practice is for important negotiations between the two parties to be carried on largely by officers of the district trades and labor council.

The movement has had a creditable weekly paper called *Le Travailleur*. Its avowed aim is "above all . . . to educate the workers in the social doctrine of the church."

The annual meetings of the federation and other important activities of public interest among the subsidiary bodies are well reported, and the cause editorially supported by *L'Action Sociale Catholique*, a prominent daily of Quebec City. But generally speaking, considering its membership, the Catholic union movement is weak in publications. On the other hand the secretariats at Montreal and Quebec furnish chosen news material to the leading dailies, and the union's close connection with the church and its numerous tributary religious organizations provides it with unusual agencies for influencing public opinion in the province.

## CHAPTER X

### THE FEDERATION OF CATHOLIC WORKERS OF CANADA—*Continued*

#### III. AIMS, PRINCIPLES, AND POLICIES

One cannot read far in the literature of Catholic unionism without being impressed with the flavor of other-worldliness that finds place in tract, press, and constitutional preamble. The ultimate concern of its founders has not been especially the economic condition of the worker, but rather the moral and spiritual condition, economic betterment being sponsored as contributing to the latter. The language is to a large extent the language of the church: biblical passages are frequent; its constitutions are avowedly based on papal encyclicals.<sup>1</sup> One reads of moral and spiritual interests as frequently as of weekly budgets, and sees at work the influence of divine institutions that are not open to question. There is in the thought of its leaders a demand for certain rigid principles to serve as anchor posts against irresponsible change, and to prevent the tendency to drift in the direction of radical materialism. This demand can only find its answer in those absolutes that have come through divine revelation. Hence we find the habit of carrying back all questions of principle and examining them at the bar of religious authority; and hence also the presence of the functioning priest at union and conventional meetings. All these things tend to

<sup>1</sup> The papal encyclicals on the social question are said to connect with the teachings of Albert Le Mun, writing at the close of the French Revolution, and of Count Montalambert, of the royal House of Orleans, who wrote from his imprisonment under Napoleon III. The first of these called attention to the folly of revolution as a method. The latter was an outspoken opponent of socialism. The kernel of their constructive doctrine was to lead the workers away from extreme methods by means of the church.

contribute a tone and a color to the movement that are not to be found in other labor movements in America.

As for the ideal which Catholic unionism sets before its members, as compared with that of other labor movements, it holds up a world in which the institutional framework is not greatly changed from our present capitalistic order, but where justice and charity rule the relations of men. In it the employer will be led to give a square deal to the workers, and the workers will be happy in affording to him the best of their services. While the assertive and the acquisitive notes are sounded at all times in terms of "rights," they are compensated for throughout, to a degree rare in trade-union literature, by the emphasis that is placed upon reciprocal "duties."

Above all, he who would have a true appreciation of Catholic unionism and its fundamental rules and processes of thought must keep in mind that, whatever it may become in the future, it has not been in Canada in the past a workers' movement. Although the contact with the concrete problems of life has brought its lay leadership into more prominence as time has gone by, it was in its beginnings a movement engineered by a religious intelligentsia, scholars interested in the problem of industrial relations for itself, and probably motivated by a desire to increase the hold of the mother-church upon the lives of the people and to maintain pure the traditions of French Canadianism. The workman was the plastic material on which they wrought. By a careful working of the ground from the bottom they were able to make the fully prepared and authoritative code of principles, as embodied in the various constitutions, an actual and dominating force in the operative life of the movement. The President at the Quebec convention, speaking of the valuable services rendered to the movement by the *retraites fermées*,<sup>2</sup> said, "This movement by virtue of its being Catholic is not like others: in

<sup>2</sup> The *retraites fermées* are retreats for meditation, prayer, and religious conferences.

order to love it, to follow it, it is necessary to be a Catholic, to *think* as a Catholic, to be completely permeated by the Catholic doctrine. . . ."

The pages which follow will be devoted to a discussion of the attitude of the movement toward private property, freedom of contract, class relationship, strikes, wage determination, and the many other moot questions of labor relationships.

Catholic unionism takes the position that the institution of property is divine in its origin and must be accepted and upheld. It finds ground for this position in the teaching of the church.<sup>3</sup> Thorough and consistent in this belief, its leaders have written in condemnation of the nationalization of public utilities, rapping the American Federation of Labor for even discussing in convention the government ownership of railways.<sup>4</sup>

In view of the fact that the institution of private property exists and will remain, society must be composed of two distinct classes, a working class and an employing class, whose differing interests must be defended by different organizations. Yet the constitution of the federation declares:

Distinct organizations and different interests do not mean opposed interests and inimical organizations. Two moral persons, as well as two individuals, can speak to each other, understand each other, live in good understanding and even in friendship. The F.C.W.C. in principle and in practice

<sup>3</sup> A strong statement of the position was made by the Sunday orator, Father Lapointe, at the 1923 convention of the federation. Speaking of the topic of the master and the vineyard and the former's right to pay eleventh-hour men as much as any others if he chose, so long as he abided by his contract with all concerned, the Reverend Father said: "As for the eleventh-hour men, am I not *free* to dispose of my goods? The whole social question is there. On one side we have a great proprietor, on the other the workers. Between them stands a free contract for work. There are discontented people who would have been ready to strike, if they had known what was going to take place. This is the society of all time. It is the natural society. People cannot change it; it will endure until the end of time. In the meantime, our Lord sees in it the kingdom of God if men allow justice and charity to reign" (*L'Action Sociale Catholique*, August 13, 1923).

<sup>4</sup> Tract 10.

disproves the theory of those who claim that capital, capitalists, and employers are born enemies of labor, workers, and wage-earners. It claims, on the contrary, that employers and employees must live agreeing with each other.

Similar statements with regard to class relations and in opposition to the Marxian doctrine of class struggle are ever recurring in their literature. Along with disapproval of the socialistic and bolshevistic attitudes to private property and dislike of materialistic ideas, this fear of their workers becoming victims of the class-strife philosophy is one of the chief reasons for their policy of isolation from all other unions other than the avowedly Christian unions of Europe.

Not only is the right of organization a right which all men have received from nature itself—the right of association—and not only is it useful and advantageous to the workers, but also it is a necessity to them on account of the character of the present industrial order. In the first place there is always the danger of the neutral<sup>5</sup> organizations getting a further foothold with their false philosophies and violent methods, to the detriment of the country's industry and the ruin of the Catholic worker, both in his working reputation and in his moral character. For this reason there must be home organization which must be Catholic and national. In the second place, industry, trade, finance, and the liberal professions are already grouped into organizations, and it behooves the workers to organize in turn to deal with them. Organization of both interests, with each side speaking only through its organization, is the way to harmony, through trade agreements, conciliation, and arbitration machinery and mutual good will.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The adjective "neuter" or "neutral" occurring frequently in the union literature refers to absence of creedal or denominational preference or reference to religious authority.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. tracts 4, 15, 18, 21. Also F.C.W.C. constitution, Art. 1.

No matter what machinery for the settling of disputes is set up, however, nor how much the parties mutually recognize and respect each other's rights, there can be no harmony between employers and employees until they can agree upon the same fundamental doctrines. Until then there can be no common basis of understanding. "The starting-point is that employers and workers should be unanimous as to the conception of their reciprocal rights and duties." "The unity of directing principles and of fundamental doctrines is . . . the first and indispensable condition of the agreement between employers and workers."

But the question arises, "Who shall make that unity?" "Who shall proclaim the doctrine defining the reciprocal duties of employers and workers? What power, above all, shall impose them upon one and the other?"<sup>7</sup>

In this extreme emphasis, and especially in the answer to the question, the Catholic movement definitely separates itself in theory, and in many of its activities, from the rest of the trade-union movement in Canada, and, according to the opinion of many, makes practically vain any hopes of Canadian labor finding common ground on questions where, in the interests of progress, it should stand as a unit. For the reply of Catholic syndicalism is that "it [the F. C. W. C.], for one, believes that this function properly belongs to the Catholic church, . . . ." and that "It knows, . . . that the church asks and claims for itself this indisputable doctrinal authority and supreme direction in labor matters."<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, it professes to look for guidance to the definitions and rules of conduct outlined in the encyclical letters of Leo XIII and fundamental rules of Pius X, giving them "its full adhesion." The Quebec National Central

<sup>7</sup> Art. I of constitution of F.C.W.C.; see *Eleventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 27.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

Trades Council, whose statement of principles is a fair sample of all constitutional preambles, states that:

Because it recognizes that the church alone has a right and is qualified to say where, in the so-called labor matters, are to be found the true and the false, the just and the unjust, the good and the bad, what is permitted and what is forbidden, this council, in the pursuit of its object, will entirely and religiously comply with the teachings and directions of religious authority.<sup>9</sup>

And the explanation of this attitude is not so much any avowed desire on the part of the church to interfere in all phases of life, such as the industrial and commercial, but rather that in the labor question itself it finds factors and activities which do come within its own particular jurisdiction. Abbé Hébert, of Montreal, in his expository letter to the 1922 convention, answering the question "Why is this syndicalism Catholic?" writes:

. . . . It behooves us to comprehend that the ground upon which the workings of the labor syndicate is operated is a groundwork where the principles of Christian morality find constant application. Take for instance the question of strikes? Is a strike permissible? . . . . A strike to be fair must conform to the rules of justice in its ways and means. But who will decide whether a strike which has been declared is right and just, and who will fix the limit to which it may extend, without interfering and injuring the rights of others? *Unless there is admitted to be some authority capable of defining with certainty the just limit of things permissible in social matters*, it is much to be feared that they [strikes] may become a means of antagonism which might be made use of with considerable imprudence and want of reflection.<sup>10</sup>

But we are warned not to think from the foregoing that the church controls the labor unions. It is true the churchmen have been prominent at general assemblies, and in drawing up the constitutions and working rules, and the chaplain is present at each union's meetings with the right to express his opinion. But his proper function there is to represent the church. It is for him to recall and state the Catholic principles and doctrine with re-

<sup>9</sup> Copied in *Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 49.

<sup>10</sup> *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 70.

gard to any question, and ask that resolutions and conduct conform to these. If he deem it necessary, he may require that a resolution be submitted to the religious authority whom he represents before being put in force; but the practical proceedings he cannot initiate, nor has he any vote. "The church does not control," argued Abbé Fortin. "The function of the almoners is that of councilors and not controllers." "The chaplain's duty," writes Father Hébert, "is to have the statutes respected. He does not interfere with the syndicates as long as they act in the proper sphere."

The system thus provides for a dividing line throughout between the moral and spiritual issues on the one hand and the purely economic and acquisitive on the other, the one set constituting a realm of principles and coming within the jurisdiction of the church and its agents, the other being more a matter of ways and means, plans and activities, that are for the most part the chief interest and responsibility of the workers. This does not mean that the two stand with respect to each other in any objective isolation; any practical project may develop a moral aspect, and, conversely, many projects undertaken for their spiritual value will require plans and activities quite without the sphere of the church. The cleavage is rather a subjective one, and the two groups working within the movement in the closest possible relation perform their respective functions in the molding of its ends and accomplishment of its objects in what seems to be the greatest harmony.

One phase of the church's function as the definer of principles is to determine the mutual rights and duties of the two parties. The Quebec Trades Council's code in this matter is adopted verbally from the papal declarations and runs in part as follows:

The obligations of . . . the workmen are these: to furnish entirely and faithfully the work which has been agreed upon and according to equity; not to wrong the employers in their property or in their persons; in the de-

fence itself of their own rights, to abstain from acts of violence, and never to transform their claims into riots.

The obligations of . . . employers are as follows: to pay the workmen a fair salary; not to interfere with their just savings either through violence, fraud, or open or hidden usury; to give them the liberty to accomplish their religious duties; not to expose them to corrupting seductions or to the danger of scandal, nor to deter them from the family spirit and love of thrift; not to impose upon them work out of proportion with their strength or ill-suited to their age or sex.<sup>11</sup>

Underlying all other principles stand the concepts justice and charity, the two great norms out of which all others must be derived in a system which holds groups and individuals alike responsible to the tribunal of conscience. Of the two, "there is a right to a claim only when justice is wronged."<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless it is intended that the relations between employers and employees shall not be carried on in terms of cold justice alone, for there "is an obligation for the rich and those who possess to assist the poor and needy; . . ." and "the poor, on their side, must not be ashamed of their poverty; they must not disdain the rich man's charity, . . ."<sup>13</sup>

It is justice, therefore, tempered with charity that is to be the rock upon which the whole structure of principles is to be built and which is to serve as the foundation of the code for the determination of every dispute. Just how far this principle of charity is to be pressed it is difficult to say. The records are rather confusing. In some cases it is clear that the writer is thinking entirely in terms of alms-giving, mutual benefit, and private insurance societies, etc., in which capitalists and laborers alike should take an interest and thus be drawn together. At other times it seems that charity is to sweeten justice in the determination of the conditions of work and even the wage rate itself.

As should be expected, principles of wage determination

<sup>11</sup> *Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 49.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

constitute one of the difficult problems. "The precepts of true equity," wrote Leo XIII in his letter, *Rerum Novarum*, require that the wage correspond in an adequate manner to the work performed."

This rather ambiguous phrase, "correspond in an adequate manner to the work performed," is interpreted by Abbé Lacroix to mean "equivalent to the economic value of the labor performed,"<sup>14</sup> and by M. Charpentier the whole statement is made to mean "The wage will be equitable only when it assures to the workman, in the distribution of profits, a share proportionate to the share he has contributed in the production."<sup>15</sup> But the Pontiff, without stopping to provide a method for determining the fraction of the total that the worker is responsible for, goes on to introduce a new principle by saying that since God expects him to live by his work in the ordained system, "then wages must not be inadequate to the maintenance of a sober and honest workman." Again he groups together two concepts in a manner not necessarily in disharmony, and yet rather unsettling, when he says:

Among the principal duties of the employer, that of giving to each proper wages must be put in the first place. In determining a fair measure of wages there are certainly many viewpoints to be considered. But in a general way let the rich and the employer remember that to exploit poverty and hardship and to speculate on indigency are things which divine and human laws equally condemn. It would be a crime calling for vengeance from heaven to rob anyone of the fruit of his labor.<sup>16</sup>

A lay writer, M. Charpentier, following through the concept that the wage should equal the worker's contribution to the product, argues that since workers are not equal in their strength, skill, and experience, and hence in their contribution, therefore "the principle of the uniform wage is not just"; but later he pares down his own principle in order to make it practical of application in the following words:

<sup>14</sup> Tract 23.

<sup>15</sup> Tract 24.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted from Tract 23.

In our time the excessive division of work has cut up many trades: under such conditions it would not be wise to pay all the workmen of a shop according to their individual competency. Since they are doing but parts of jobs, justice requires that they should be classified by groups when it comes to finding a basis of appreciation for the work. The result is that a scale of salaries is absolutely necessary. And this same scale, in order to be fair, must rest on a minimum salary based on a minimum of work.<sup>17</sup>

Again, in this same connection, Father Hébert writes: "To hold that the time spent at the different trades is the only standard of salary is to preach an arrant socialistic principle," but ". . . the custom is established in large concerns of paying the workmen categorically, of fixing the scale of salary according to the nature of the trade." And then, for good measure, he adds, "It is no longer the personal value of the workman that establishes the rate of salary; it is rather the importance of the trade."<sup>18</sup>

Support is found for the minimum wage in a statement of Pope Leo, where he declares: "Above their [the employers] free will, there is a law of natural equity which is still higher and a great deal older, viz., that the salary should not be so small as not to allow the thrifty and honest workmen to live." And as an indication of what a minimum should involve, Father Hébert, voicing the divine concern for the family institution, says, "The worker must receive enough remuneration for his work to enable him to give his children, if he cannot give them considerable comfort, at least the daily bread and means to allow them to create for themselves a suitable future." He looks forward to an ideal condition in which the charity concept bulks large when he prophesies the coming of "the day when the employers, inspiring themselves with the principles of Catholic morals . . . will strive to give to the work of the workman an economic value sufficiently increased to allow him to make sure of his own as well

<sup>17</sup> Tract 24.

<sup>18</sup> *Programme—Souvenir* (1922).

as the living of his family. It will then be the reign of charity rendering justice fruitful for the benefit of mankind."

The constitution of the Quebec council talks of wage determination in terms of both concepts, viz., the cost of living, and the amount and quality of service performed by the worker.

It is difficult to see where Catholic unionism has contributed much that is new in this matter. As compared with other labor movements in America it deserves credit for trying to find a theoretical basis for setting the wage rate. It may, and probably does, press to advantage in some instances the simple charitable plea for gentler and more Christian methods wherein the employer does not exact all he might in a given state of the labor market; but indications are that it often works against the interest of the worker by keeping him from fighting for all he might if organized in a more militant union. Apart from this, propably the most important practical points to note are:<sup>19</sup> (1) that it stands for the principle of the minimum wage; (2) that it opposes uniformity, but favors a scale of wages, the scale to be determined in the collective trade agreement.

As to who shall be the parties in the joint meeting to decide on what the wage scale shall be, while there are statements to be found favoring local joint councils (see for example Tract 7), a declaration of the Quebec National Central Trades Council reads: "[There] will necessarily be war if the wages paid are below the fair price, which is determined neither by the will of the employers, nor even by the agreement of the employers and the men *in their employ*, but by the cost of the necessities of

<sup>19</sup> In actual practice the wage scale is a compromise between conflicting interests, as is the case elsewhere. The employer talks in terms of what his business can afford; the employees, in terms of their needs. The employer, it is said, sometimes acquires an ally in the priest by threatening him with the loss of the industry to his parish if he cannot get workers at the wages he proposes. On the other side, the very fact of the increasing emphasis on co-ordinated organization shows that the employee's share in the distributed product is not independent of the strength he is able to show to back his demands.

life and the share of the worker in production." The implication is that it is a matter for the whole trade.

Standards for working conditions are also a thorny matter. In its statement of principles the National Catholic Trades Council of Quebec numbers among the obligations of employers that they shall not impose upon the workers "work out of proportion to their strength or ill-suited to their age or sex."<sup>20</sup> Father Edmond Lacroix, chaplain of the plumber's union, writing in the same connection, quotes from *Rerum Novarum*: "To demand an amount of work which, by thickening the faculties of the soul, crushes the body and consumes its strength to exhaustion, is a line of conduct which neither justice nor humanity can tolerate. Man's activity, limited as his nature is, has limits beyond which it cannot go. . . . The number of hours in a working day must not exceed the measure of strength of the worker."<sup>21</sup> And again, "It is for the employers to see to it that the workman has sufficient time to give to piety."<sup>22</sup>

At the convention held in Three Rivers in 1919 a resolution was passed in opposition to any compulsory uniform working day. It ran as follows:

The Congress expresses the opinion that any measure tending to decree a fixed number of hours as constituting the legal working day in all industries is an arbitrary, unwise, and inopportune measure; but it believes and maintains that the duration of working days must be such as to insure the workman a reasonable time to recuperate, fulfill his duties as a husband, head of a family, citizen, and Catholic, and to meet the well-understood needs of commerce, industry, and finance.<sup>23</sup>

J. R. Beaudoin, commenting on this resolution, says the eight-hour day for all industries is "arbitrary, unwise, and inopportune" because it interferes with the worker's freedom to determine the duration of his own working hours; it fails to take account of the intensity of work in different industries; it fails

<sup>20</sup> *Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 49.

<sup>21</sup> Tract 23.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Copied in Tract 17.

to recognize that climatic conditions are not the same everywhere. In Canada, for instance, the building trades can only be carried on part of the year, as distinguished from the same work in the United States. Hence the worker should be allowed to work longer hours in the former during his working period. "It is better," therefore, "to lay down luminous principles which safeguard the workman's rights and to be inspired by local circumstances of time and place in fixing hours of labor."<sup>24</sup>

In general it would seem that the cause of the shorter working day has not been pressed as vigorously by the Catholic unions as by the internationals. Where they have occupied the field alone they have been more ready to lend ear to the argument that the industry cannot stand the reduced production that will be involved, and that it must eventually come back on the pay envelope. / ✓

On the other hand, numerous resolutions have been passed at the general conventions demanding reduced hours and indorsing "the English working day"; and others, directed toward the provincial legislature, to procure legislation to compel the earlier closing of stores. Similar activities have not been lacking on the part of local bodies. Thus in 1920 a demand was made by the retail clerks of Hull, members of Catholic syndicates, that the municipality should order the stores closed at 7 P.M., as they were in Ottawa. And Mr. Morin, of the Hull trades council, places among its best achievements the reduction of hours among its various syndicates. Strikes also have taken place in which shorter hours has been a leading demand, as, for example, among the Montreal carriage-makers.

Regarding the matter of shop control and industrial democracy, so-called, Catholic unionism restricts the voice of labor purely to the labor aspect of industry. This is well defined by Hébert when he writes:

<sup>24</sup> Tract 17.

✓ The employer has a right to his freedom. . . . He who conceives an enterprise and who bears its risks should retain control of his business. If the laborer, member of a union or not, is permitted to discuss the standard of salaries, the physical and moral conditions under which he works, he has no right to interfere in the management of the shop or factory or threaten arbitrarily with a suspension of work his employer anxious to remain his own master. And that which is right in the direction, is equally so in the execution of an enterprise.<sup>25</sup>

Nevertheless, he contends, this leaves room for the establishment of fundamental rules covering working conditions for a whole trade, and for collective agreements with employers by the different unions, and argues that modern industry requires them. Moreover, "Catholic syndicalism . . . urges the formation of joint committees of employers and employees for the establishment of working conditions . . . and conciliation and arbitration for the settling of difficulties."<sup>26</sup>

✓ Catholic unionism strongly emphasizes the principles of conciliation and arbitration, and would permit no cessation of work while such proceedings are pending. Arbitration is to be voluntary except in the case of public utilities, where the compulsory element is advocated. The convention at Three Rivers adopted the following resolution:

In the interest of good order in the community and of harmony among the social classes, and for the purpose of avoiding unfortunately too frequent strikes, this congress recommends, as a *normal* means of settling disputes and of solving conflicts which arise between employers and workmen, *conciliation* and the principle of *free arbitration* on the *basis of equal representation* in the selection of arbitrators and with the mutual agreement to accept the decision of the court as final.

<sup>25</sup> *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 77.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74. A considerable discussion regarding the formation of industrial councils composed of the two parties to establish working conditions and adjustment of grievances took place at the Chicoutimi convention. See *Labor Gazette* (1920), p. 1351.

The substance of this measure, which finds its authority in the teaching of Leo XIII, was later embodied in the F.C.W.C. constitution.

Conciliation is urged on all occasions as the means of overcoming difficulties and arriving at a good understanding; but when it fails, steps toward arbitration must be taken. With regard to arbitration, the chief features are: (1) the uniform declaration of intent to offer it and urge it upon the employer; (2) the preference for the plural tribunal so that the union may be directly represented; (3) the manner of selecting the third arbitrator; (4) the course to be followed if the employer refuses to appoint an arbitrator.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> As a sample of the actual arrangements and procedure when a difference arises, the following passages from the constitution of the Quebec Printers and Bookbinders National Union will serve:

#### ARTICLE XVI

I. "In case of a conflict . . . between members of the union and an employer, affecting a professional interest, . . . the members of the union affected by the same are required, *before any other action is taken*, to submit in writing their demand or complaint to the executive committee.

II. "The executive committee shall then employ all means at its disposal to bring about an understanding between the parties and affect an amicable settlement. . . .

III. "The executive committee, failing to settle the difficulty, shall report to the council. The latter, after an investigation, and after consulting the general assembly, shall decide whether there is reason for it to interfere on behalf of the complainant. In all cases the complainant shall accept the council's award.

IV. "If the council decides there is good reason to interfere on behalf of the complainant it shall proceed as follows: ". . . the council shall propose arbitration to the employer. If the employer accepts, the council shall appoint an arbitrator; the employer shall appoint his own, and these two arbitrators shall appoint a third. The arbitration tribunal thus constituted shall hear the parties, make an investigation, and render its decision, which shall be final and binding upon the parties concerned. In case the two arbitrators appointed, one by the employer, the other by the council, cannot agree on the selection of a third arbitrator, they are to ask the Church authorities to designate one. If the employer rejects either the proposition of arbitration or the appointment of the

With regard to government employees and workers in public utilities, we can do no better than quote from the federal constitution:

The F.C.W.C. believes that employees in the various municipal, provincial, and federal services, as well as employees in public utilities, have, as well as all other workers, the right to form among themselves organizations having for their object to secure and maintain for the various classes of employees reasonable working conditions. The F.C.W.C., however, refuses to recognize to the organizations, the members of which accomplish services indispensable to the good order of the community, the right to use the strike even as a final means of securing the triumph of just claims. But it demands from the public authorities that they establish, for the settlement of disputes between these employees and their employers, arbitration courts whose decision would be final and binding on both parties. Such courts should be able to deal with disputes concerning all the working conditions of such employees.<sup>28</sup>

third arbitrator, as hereinbefore provided, the council shall submit the whole matter to the church authorities for the necessary directions.

#### ARTICLE XVII

"Pending all these negotiations, the member or members concerned are to remain at work, or their cause shall be abandoned by the executive committee or council, and they shall be expelled from the union" (*Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 51).

In regard to the selection of a third arbitrator, however, when the two arbitrators appointed by the disputing parties fail to make a selection the Church authorities are not asked by all unions to make the choice. Sometimes a judge of the superior court is to be called upon. In some cases, again, it is provided that where the employer refuses either to arbitrate or to co-operate in naming the third arbitrator, the whole matter in dispute is to be submitted to the Dominion government authorities. Others, the Lachine syndicate, for example, do not commit themselves definitely by constitution, but where the employer refuses arbitration "the assembly will take the most effective measures to assure the respect of legitimate rights. . . ."

<sup>28</sup> Constitution F.C.W.C., chap. i, quoted in *Eleventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 27. Previously, at the Three Rivers convention, it was resolved: "The Congress recommends the arbitration courts, with power to give a compulsory award, for the solution of disputes concerning the working conditions of firemen, policemen, and waterworks employees, and that in the organization of such arbitration courts, the government adhere to the principle of having the arbitrators appointed by the parties concerned, even in the case of appeal courts." This last clause would seem to indicate a determination always

Up to 1923 the machinery of the provincial Trades Disputes Act (1901), which provides for a registrar of conciliation and arbitration with power to offer or to arrange for mediation and, if necessary, for tripartite arbitration boards, has never been called upon by the Catholic unions, they having preferred to rely on their own machinery. Statements were made, however, at the 1923 convention of the federation which would indicate that a change of attitude is taking place.<sup>29</sup>

From quotations already given it will have been inferred that Catholic unionism does not place its dependence on the strike as a chief means for obtaining its objects. With its acceptance of the economic order any discussion of a *general* strike is, of course, out of order. Some of its leaders have boasted that it is the greatest force for order, and that since its rise Quebec has been a model for the rest of Canada in the matter of industrial unrest. Others have condemned strikes that have been called by leaders of international unions as quite unwarranted. Certainly in the course of its history it can point to many cases where it has spoiled the chances of its rival in promoting strikes or in successfully carrying through those already under way. The convention at Three Rivers declared itself in opposition to the sympathetic strike.

Turning to the literature on the subject, we find the strike roundly condemned by Pope Leo as "detrimental to both employers and employees," harmful to commerce, and "injurious to society's best interests." The F.C.W.C. constitution says "the strike is a dangerous weapon which can only be used as a final

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to have at least one person on every arbitration board who shall be familiar with, and who shall stand ready to champion, the interests and principles of Catholic unionists; also a distrust of the personnel that might be named by government authorities. Abbé Hébert, commenting on the same point, says, in *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 75, "If it has the law to intervene, it is not in order to have the arbitrators named by the government; it is solely to give a more efficacious sanction to the decision rendered by the arbitrators chosen by the two sides."

<sup>29</sup> For terms of Trades Disputes Act, see *Labor Legislation in Canada* (1920), pp. 291-94.

and extreme means, in certain cases only, and provided the conditions which in a given case make it lawful are realized.”<sup>80</sup>

Perhaps the best exposition of the Catholic union’s attitude is given by Mr. Gerard Tremblay, secretary of the Montreal Secretariat. He argues that “The National and Catholic syndicates never objected in principle to a *just* strike. . . . For the strike is based on the right of legitimate defense, and upon the freedom of work.” But a strike to be just must fulfil four conditions:

(1) The strikers must not be bound by any just contract. If, in fact, a just contract has been formed between employers and employees, the parties concerned must make it a point to observe it. [But] it is evident that *if the contract is not just, the workman is not tied to its clauses*. And if the employer violates his own contract, the worker has a right to revoke it. (2) Strikers must have exhausted all means of conciliation. (3) Strikers must have a sufficiently good reason for declaring a strike. This reason must be proportioned to the importance of the evils which always result from a strike: loss of time, harm done to industry [etc.]. (4) Strikers must have a hope of success. They shall have to weigh with caution possibilities of success or failure. Labor leaders who provoke a strike when they are about certain that it will not succeed work directly against the best interests of the labor class.<sup>81</sup>

Moreover, he notes that in general the advantages derived by strikers are far outweighed by the losses they suffer.

Consistently with its respect for property rights, Catholic unionism forbids sabotage in all its forms. Similarly the rights of non-strikers must not be trampled on. “Violation of the right of property, or of freedom to work, would bind the conscience and may even compel restitution for damage done.”<sup>82</sup> On the other hand, “strikers may use persuasion [peaceful] to make

<sup>80</sup> *Eleventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 27.

<sup>81</sup> Tract 5. The opportunistic flavor of points (3) and (4) apparently aimed in criticism at the methods of other unions, would seem to be somewhat out of accord with the Catholic emphasis on absolute justice.

<sup>82</sup> Hébert, in *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 77; cf. also Tract 14.

others cease work.”<sup>33</sup> Violence to the person is everywhere condemned.

The closed shop is acceptable or not according to its purpose. Quoting again from Hébert:

The closed shop has a double interpretation, one conformable to the principles of Catholic morals and the other with a taint of socialism. When a closed shop has for object the raising of apprenticeship, the bettering of trades, and the formation of honest and competent workmen, it may become one of the clauses of a just and fair agreement. *If the employer cedes a part of his autonomy he will find ample compensation in abundant and competent workmanship.*<sup>34</sup>

In this statement we have an attempt to bring the closed shop into legal consistency with the idea of the employers' sacred right to a free labor market, upon which point also Catholic syndicalism lays emphasis. But, to continue with his analysis: “When on the contrary the closed shop's only aim is to swell the number of members in a union, ostracize non-union workmen, and impose on the employer incompetent workmen, it then becomes a principle dangerously subversive of the social order.” He goes on to condemn its application by the international unions:

If in the international unions the closed shop has raised so many protestations it is because it has been too often the means, in their hands, of exploiting the employer. Wipe out apprenticeship, dominate by the way of a big membership, and control industries by the choice of employees; such are the diverse aspects under which it has manifested itself in the greater number of the international unions. It is not astonishing that under these conditions it is so badly looked upon and has so little of the public favor.<sup>35</sup>

As a matter of fact the Catholic unions do not press for the closed shop except where it involves retaliation against opposing unions for past deeds. Some of their spokesmen consider it too harsh a weapon, especially in view of the Christian professions of the organization.

<sup>33</sup> *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 77.

<sup>34</sup> Italics mine.

<sup>35</sup> *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 12.

More frequently the demand is softened down to request *preferential* rather than closed-shop treatment, and in general it may be said that the preferential clause in trade agreements is what is pressed for in normal circumstances.<sup>36</sup>

The Catholic unions lend considerable emphasis to sickness and death benefits. They are opposed to any form of government insurance for the workers.

The co-operative method of buying has been favored at various conventions and tried out in different centers with varying success. The most conspicuous case at present is the one at Lachine; of lesser brilliance is that at Hull. After two failures while under a hired management, it has limited its activities to serving evening customers. Contrary to its earlier habits, it sells at cost, giving its customers directly the wholesale prices in food-stuffs, coal, cord wood, etc.

Another feature is the workers' bank, which carries on a regular business of receiving deposits and investing them. Both co-

<sup>36</sup> Because it brings out so many of the points we have been dealing with we quote an extract from the preamble of the constitution of the National Union of the South Shore Workmen. Clause 3 contains the following :

"Because the N.U.S.S.W. knows . . . that the employer, being the master of his shop, has the right to employ the workers he wants to, and, on the other hand, it claims, relying on the encyclical letter, *Novarum Rerum*, that the workers have the right to organize to protect their professional interests and that they use their right in asking the employer to give preference, other things being equal, to the syndicated workmen, the union will propose to the employers who will employ some of its members the following agreement: If they promise (a) to give preference to the workingmen of the N.U.S.S.W., (b) not to close the establishments in case of disputes, (c) to settle disputes by agreement between the representatives of the union and of the employer, and in cases where this is not sufficient, by means of boards of conciliation or arbitration, as described in Article 37 of the present regulations, the members of the N.U.S.S.W. promise, on the other hand, (a) to furnish competent workers who do not belong to foreign unions, (b) not to quit work in case of difficulties, (c) to settle their disputes by agreement, through representatives of the union and the employer, and, in cases where this is not sufficient, by means of boards of conciliation or arbitration, as described in Article 37 of the present regulations" (*Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 51).

operatives and banks are generally carried on in connection with the district central council; but neither has any claims upon the latter for losses, nor do they share with it in their gains.

While active in the endeavor to influence particular legislation in its own interest, the Catholic movement is itself avowedly non-political. Clause 9 of Article 3 of the federal constitution declares "the F.C.W.C. can affiliate with no political parties whatever," and Article 29 states "no discussion of a political character shall be tolerated in a congress of the Federation." As if this were not enough, it passed an amendment to the foregoing at the Quebec convention this year (1923) reading: "It is forbidden to this Confederation, as to each of its member groups, to become engaged, as a political body, federal, provincial, or municipal. Neither will it present nor support any political candidate, even though he be one of its members."<sup>37</sup>

Paralleling the actual rivalry for membership, there runs in the literature of the Catholic organization a bitter and unremitting condemnation of the international movement, both for its ideals and its methods as well as for its unfitness by virtue of its organization for the Canadian worker. Some of the charges brought against it are: (1) That it is lacking in principles of any kind, religious or otherwise; and as a consequence is materialistic and drifting toward socialism. Any social movement that takes a neutral stand toward religion really becomes anti-Christian and has no religion anywhere.<sup>38</sup> (2) That it follows natural morals instead of religious morals, and hence practices unjust strikes and violent methods.<sup>39</sup> (3) That it is unpatriotic, destructive of the French language in Canada, and un-Catholic.<sup>40</sup> (4) That it is socialistic, tolerating discussions on various schemes of government ownership, and that the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress in particular has been in process of infiltration

<sup>37</sup> *L'Action Sociale Catholique*, August 16, 1923.

<sup>38</sup> Tracts 18 and 21.

<sup>39</sup> Tract 18.

<sup>40</sup> Tracts 10 and 18.

with socialistic ideas for many years, and capable of giving birth to workers' political parties and various forms of industrial unionism.<sup>41</sup> (5) That the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress is servile to the American Federation of Labor, and that for Canadians internationalism means the loss of independence, the sending out of Canadian money, and the loss of leadership by men of their own mentality, hopes, and aspirations.<sup>42</sup>

A few recent statements are to be found where leaders of the Catholic movement have shown some disposition to recognize some virtue in their opponents and to work with them for mutual advancement in particular matters, and instances are recalled where the two actually did co-operate; but in the main a state of war exists.

The effect on the internationals has been to weaken their hand in the province and—according to the Catholics—to cause them to resort to much gentler tactics in dealing with the employers.<sup>43</sup> The internationalists, on their part, admit the injury to their cause,<sup>44</sup> but they charge the Catholic writers with mis-

<sup>41</sup> Tracts 10 and 16.

<sup>42</sup> Mr. Joseph Gauthier, representative of the Montreal branch of the International Typographical Union, in his report to the 1921 convention of that organization stated as follows:

"A great movement has been undertaken during the past few years in the province of Quebec to do away with the international unions and favor the so-called national and Catholic unions in all branches. The most clever men were appointed by the clergy jointly with some of the principal industrial men, as well as financial influences who are supporters of the movement, to establish and favor the national and Catholic unions. Funds were levied and a great campaign of propaganda was started and is still going on to ruin the international unions, which are struggling constantly to render the work of the Catholic unions ineffective and protect their interest. In spite of their efforts a certain number of international unions have seen their efforts reduced very materially by the introduction of national Catholic unions' principles in their ranks. The same unions have seen their wages decrease considerably, being at the mercy of their employers who took advantage of the division among the union men" (*Eleventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 25).

<sup>43</sup> Tracts 11 and 3.

<sup>44</sup> *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 32.

statements as to the policies of international trade unions and with abuse of their officers and members.<sup>45</sup> At different times the Trades and Labor Congress has taken steps to combat the rival influence. At a special conference at Ottawa, May 10, 1920, it was decided to ask the American Federation of Labor to create a special fund for publication and distribution of literature in French as well as English suitable for presenting the facts in their true light. It was also determined to urge each international organization to maintain in Canada as large an organizing force as possible. These measures were adopted at the following convention of the following year.<sup>46</sup>

In response to charges against the internationals of domination by American leadership, the congress prepared and issued to the press in 1920 a report based upon a questionnaire sent out to the fifty-nine affiliated American organizations. In this it was pointed out that the forty-five most important bodies (embracing all but 2,700 members of the internationals affiliated) had an aggregate of twenty-nine vice-presidents and twenty executive-board members who were residents of Canada and members of Canadian local unions, and in addition forty-five paid organizers operating north of the boundary. In many cases, it was remarked, Canada is defined as a separate district within the international union, and in one instance, viz., the International Association of Machinists, a separate Canadian office is maintained and the entire Canadian organization work controlled by the first vice-president, who must be a resident of Canada.<sup>47</sup>

As a refutation of the charge that the Canadian labor movement was "fleeced" through its affiliation with the American movement, and that much money was sent out of Canada while little was received, the executive council of the A. F. of L. report-

<sup>45</sup> *Eleventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 34.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*; *Tenth Annual Report*, p. 46.

<sup>47</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-sixth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 70.

ed to the 1920 convention of that body that the total of payments made into Canada for the year previous by the forty-five leading internationals affiliated with the federation was \$835,713, while the total sum received from Canada was \$617,324, which meant a surplus of expenditure over receipts equal to 75 per cent of the total cost of organization work in Canada. The report went on to state that "while politically the labor movement of Canada is as independent of the American labor movement as is the Canadian citizenship from the citizenship of the United States, yet the industrial relations between Canadian members and members in the United States has always been a relation unaffected by the border line."<sup>48</sup>

One of the issues which has aroused most public interest is the contention of the Catholic movement for representation on various public bodies. A resolution at the Montreal convention asked the federal government that the Catholic workers be adequately represented at Geneva. A resolution at Three Rivers requested that Catholic unions receive representation on federal commissions in proportion to their numerical strength in the Canadian trade-union movement.

Following the adoption of the latter resolution there arose one of the most stirring incidents in the history of the organization and one that gave it prominence for the first time with the people of Canada beyond Quebec. Taking the occasion of the planning of a building-trades conference to be held at Ottawa, the federal bureau proceeded to the capital and laid its specific demands before the Minister of Labor. According to Abbé Fortin, who, as general chaplain, was a member of the party, the bureau advanced the following claims: (1) that the right of Catholic workers to be represented on commissions appointed by the government be recognized; (2) that of the thirty delegates invited to the building-trades conference, three should be members of the Catholic union.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

The latter request was refused on the ground that the Department of Labor had nothing to do with the choice of delegates to the conference in question; that the minister had simply yielded to a request of the two parties to the industry to send out the invitations for them; and that the Catholic unions, not having members in the employ of the building trades concerned, were not featured in the choice of delegates. This answer, however, was not satisfactory to the Catholic organizations. Their cause was championed editorially by the *Montreal Gazette*, and a lengthy and heated debate was precipitated in the House of Commons by Hon. E. Lapointe, of Quebec, who had introduced the delegation to Minister G. D. Robertson. The debate in its course called into action Premier Meighen, the Minister of Justice, and other prominent parliamentarians. While the labor minister's decision had hinged on the second only of the claims put forward by the delegation, the discussion in the press and in the House raised the more general first claim and even wandered into a weighing up of the merits and demerits of the Catholic organization as such and its bearing as a second and rival labor body upon the welfare of Canadian industry.<sup>49</sup>

A second incident involving the same principle occurred in the autumn and early winter of 1921. It came up in connection with the appointment of Mr. Tom Moore and Mr. Galipeault as Canadian representative and technical adviser, respectively, to the International Labor Conference at Geneva. The secretary of the Catholic Federation, on behalf of the federal bureau protested to the Minister of Labor against his failure to do justice to the Catholic unions in this choice. The position taken was that a second adviser should be appointed along with Mr. Galipeault and that he should be chosen from the Catholic group. Mr. Robertson's reply was that the Canadian government had no choice in the matter, but that the terms of appointment were laid down in Article 389 of the Versailles Treaty and required

<sup>49</sup> *Debates of House of Commons* (1921), pp. 1625-47.

that each country's delegates should be named at the instance of the labor organization possessing the largest body of workers. Moreover, if a second adviser were named, he argued, the Canadian government would have no right to make a choice in conformity with this demand. This answer was not received with satisfaction by the bureau. Its contention was that the peace treaty, rightly interpreted, did not say "that the delegates and advisers were to be chosen in each country solely by the organization with the most workers, nor even that they should be chosen necessarily from among its members; but simply that the different governments should choose delegates and advisers in agreement with . . . the most representative organization."<sup>50</sup> Minister Robertson, after receiving the indorsement of the Department of Justice upon his position, stood by his interpretation of the clauses in question and the matter was dropped with the Catholic unions still protesting.<sup>51</sup>

At the 1923 convention of the federation it was stated by President Beaulle that it was hoped that the main principle sought, viz., the right of the lesser body to have representation on public commissions of all kinds involving labor delegates, was in a fair way to be guaranteed by the new government at Ottawa.

#### IV. PROBLEMS RAISED BY CATHOLIC UNIONISM

✓ Catholic unionism may be characterized as Catholic, racial, conservative, and charitable. Over the two last-named qualities we need not dwell, for they are calculated to give rise to policies which, however much they may be lamented by those who would place the emphasis differently, nevertheless carry nothing of the element of exclusiveness, and are generally admitted as acceptable in human relations.

<sup>50</sup> From correspondence published in *Le Travailleur*, February 16, 1922.

<sup>51</sup> This has been worked out by giving the Catholic unions the right to name the adviser to one of the government delegates at Geneva.

The demand for national trade unionism as opposed to the American connection is doubtless, to some degree, a *raison d'être* of the Catholic movement. On the other hand it is doubtful if the fear of the political foreigner has been as dominant in the minds of the promoters as the literature would indicate. It is to be noted that there was already a purely Canadian organization in the country with which they might have joined in a common protest movement against the internationals. An equally significant point is the narrow connotation of the words "national" and "Canadian" in the minds of many French Canadians of Quebec. While it is true that the constitution of the F.C.W.C. gives expression to the principle of a true nationalism in the requirement that every member must be a British subject, nevertheless the whole impression left on the reader who has covered the union literature extensively is that the end sought is really racial rather than national in the political sense. The appeal that has gone out to the workers against the internationals is as often couched in terms of guarding the French language and institutions, the ways of thought of the province, and the reputation of the French Canadian as a workman as it is of protecting the general Canadian interest against the greater forces of American unionism. In other cases the two ideas are linked together in the same appeal.<sup>52</sup> Putting it briefly, although perhaps too strongly, the Catholic movement is a movement for French Canadianism rather than for Canadianism in an inclusive sense.<sup>53</sup>

Another problem that has arisen in connection with Catholic unionism has to do with its religious exclusiveness. Early in the history of the movement, shortly after its declaration that membership was to be entirely Catholic, Protestant workers complained that they were given no protection by the new unions.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>52</sup> See, for example, Tracts 4, 10, and 25.

<sup>53</sup> For Quebec's use of term "Canadian," cf. G. E. Marquis, *Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science* (May, 1923), p. 12.

<sup>54</sup> *Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 43.

Feeling the justice of the complaint, and perhaps the dangers of their own position, the unions compromised by creating what they called "associate membership" through the issue of "adjunct membership cards." By this provision non-Catholics may become members but may not hold office or vote. The arrangement is only temporary. Protestants are expected, according to the rules, as soon as they become numerous enough, to form their own distinct sections with their own officers and separate meetings. While each section "will be developed according to its own aspirations and be directed according to the principles of its faith," the two "will have a mutual understanding on a basis of justice and brotherly love in all questions of common interest in the united trade syndicate."<sup>55</sup>

This idea of a sectional syndicate with the sections following denominational lines is one that has been given little attention by the critics of the movement; and perhaps rightly so, since it is only lately that it has come in for discussion. Nevertheless it is in the minds of the leaders today. Holland is regarded as exemplary in possessing the ideal labor organization. Catholic sections are to look to their almoners for interpretation of principles; others are to look to their clergy; but all unite their voices for affairs of common concern, such as ordinary wage or hour demands. In the matter of forming a trade agreement the united syndicate speaks to the employer. In this machinery they hold they are creating nothing other than is used in Europe and in certain fraternal organizations in America. The system in this way becomes more inclusive than the Catholic movement is generally allowed to be. Yet even when it shall have been modeled on this basis it still closes the door to any who are not professing Christians. There must be the positive avowal of Christian subservience and acceptance of Christian religious authorities on doctrines of right and wrong. Especially is the clear voice of religion needed when the worker's blood is hot over matters in dis-

<sup>55</sup> *Programme—Souvenir du Premier Congress*, p. 70.

pute; for it is at such times that he is apt to go to extremes and to adopt those revolutionary methods which are always bad.

Apart from this dream for the future—for it is as yet a matter principally of the future—it would seem that the present arrangement, with its inequality within the union, is not calculated to give satisfaction to the non-Catholic worker nor to be free from the charge of injury to his rights in a free country. A closed-shop policy must inevitably practically force him in many cases either to accept a membership which is inferior to that of his co-workers or to change his home or profession. Moreover, Catholic unions have been solicited, in some instances at least, to eliminate as fast as possible their associate membership.<sup>56</sup> How far this question should be presented as academic and how far there has been or is a real hardship resulting from a religious monopoly of the labor market is difficult to learn in view of the contradictory statements of the two sides. The Catholics assert that everywhere Protestants receive all the protection they need. On the other hand, Senator G. D. Robertson, in defense of his ministerial acts under the attacks of Hon. E. Lapointe and Senator Casgrain, draws a picture of great unfairness, and it is claimed that the Department of Labor at Ottawa has been complained to at various times by Protestants.<sup>57</sup>

Numerous expressions have been given in condemnation of labor organizing along sectarian lines, not only by neuter union leaders, but also by impartial students of the movement. But while they have uttered their protest they have suggested no legal hindrance. Before the eyes of the law, individuals have the right to organize for any lawful purpose. Up to the present, at least, there has been nothing to prevent a group of workers from naming profession of a particular religious faith as a condition of membership. If the effects fall upon certain individuals too

<sup>56</sup> *Programme—Souvenir* (1922), p. 37.

<sup>57</sup> *Debates of House of Commons* (1921), p. 1630. Also *Proceedings of the Thirty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 58.

few in numbers to form effective unions of their own, and whose conscience forbids them to subscribe to the creed chosen by the majority, so much the worse for them.

Yet where labor organizes on such a basis the effect would surely be to cause the law before many years to condemn the closed shop as a method of unionism. Nay, more: it is conceivable that inasmuch as the right to have effective membership in a trade-union group is becoming of great importance to the wage-earner, the time may soon be at hand when the state, in its attempt to maintain equality of opportunity before the law, will forbid creedal requirements to appear in the constitutions of workers' organizations.

Internationalist leaders, however, rely on no such state action. Not by way of legislation against creedal exclusiveness, but by way of education from within and practical experience in dealing with employers, will remedy come. In view of the thousands of Catholics that remain in non-denominational unions they look forward to the day when Catholic workers will tell the church to confine her attention to purely spiritual matters and leave the organizations of labor to run their own affairs.<sup>58</sup> Others call attention to the lessening element of religious domination at more recent conventions, as compared with the earlier. Internationalists are, however, no less eloquent than of yore in their condemnation of the exclusive principle. Thus, Chairman Wilkinson, of the committee on officers, reports in the 1921 convention of the Trades and Labor Congress, "It has always been the policy of the Congress to avoid at all times the questions of religion, and it is difficult for us to understand how the officers of a church can be permitted to have a vital control over the decisions of labor organizations, as was shown to be the case with the national Catholic unions. . . ."<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Cf. P. M. Draper, speech at Ottawa Building Conference, quoted in *Debates of House of Commons* (1920).

<sup>59</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 173.

Over against the papal literature, moreover, cited by the Catholic unions, calling for the adherence of all Catholic workers where possible to purely Catholic organizations, have been placed the letters of Cardinal Gibbons (written in September, 1918) and Father Ryan as indorsements by high spiritual authorities of the attitude of Catholics within the neuter unions. Generally speaking, the Irish Catholics of Montreal are quite opposed to the judgment of Leo in this matter, and for the most part Catholic workers outside of Quebec are not disposed to tolerate his illiberal interpretation.<sup>60</sup>

From the point of view of unionism as a whole, the most important consideration arising out of the Catholic union movement is its effect in dividing the forces of labor into two hostile groups.<sup>61</sup> This leads to various results. In the first place it weakens the bargaining power of labor by introducing an undesirable form of competition in the labor commodity. The employers of Montreal are well aware of the rivalry that exists, and play off one organization against the other. The presence of the second union is said to be largely the cause of the cheaper labor prices and the smaller number of strikes than in other Canadian centers. In different parts of the province the Catholic unions have not hesitated to lend themselves to the frustrating of strikes called by internationals, and in the battle for the closed shop each has at times had the banishment of the rival organization in mind, rather than the higher cause of unionism. The internationals claim that their progressive demands have continually been balked by

<sup>60</sup> It is claimed by international leaders that as time passes, bringing its experience with actual situations, the conventions—and, in fact, the whole Catholic movement—tend to become less unlike the older unionism; that in Quebec, as in Europe, the tendency is to recede from many of the earlier declared policies and idealistic positions.

<sup>61</sup> The Catholic unionists answer this charge of dividing the labor forces of Canada with the rejoinder that there was division before their entry into the field; that the Canada Trades and Labor Congress, through its action in expelling all but international unions in 1902, is the party most responsible for division. Cf. Tract 19.

the Catholics; while the latter boast that one of their chief effects on labor activities is to purge them of those radical and revolutionary tactics to which all labor movements not founded on unchanging principles have a tendency to run.

Another phase of the weakening through division and the uncompromising hostility of the rival factions appears in the relations with the government.<sup>62</sup> It is a matter of record in Quebec that the two can rarely agree on any project of benefit to labor. Each presents its various demands year after year with no idea of finding common ground with the other on any question. A comparison of the demands, taking them year by year, indicates that, so far as a considerable percentage of the total is concerned, they are working for much the same thing; but in the means for accomplishing their aims there is little agreement. The policy of the Catholic unions of drawing up their measures in the form of complete parliamentary bills before presenting to the governments cannot be expected to bring any abatement of the difficulty. Confronted with requests that will give satisfaction to only part of the organized labor of the province and which may even give offense to the remainder, the government is naturally slow

<sup>62</sup> One matter in which Catholic unionism has been at variance with the other labor forces has been its campaign for procuring incorporation of unions. The result was that during the session of 1924 the Quebec Parliament passed an act respecting professional syndicates providing for incorporation. The act requires the directors and two-thirds of the members to be British subjects. It outlines the rights and privileges of incorporated unions for holding property and contracting, and requires them to keep separate accounts for each branch of their activities, as well as a general expense account, these special funds being liable only for their own debts except in case of a general liquidation, and the funds of a mutual benefit or pension account in particular being unseizable save for payment of annuities and debts to members. The members of a union are bound by its rules and by the terms of its collective agreement with an employer if within eight days of the deposit of the agreement with the minister of public works they have not resigned from the union. Under the act, federations have the same rights and powers as individual unions, with the additional privilege of instituting councils of conciliation and arbitration for disputes between unions the decisions of which shall be final when confirmed by a superior court.

to take action of any kind. In the meantime the Catholic unionists are complaining at their conventions of the inattention of the legislature to their demands, and the internationalists are charging, not apparently without some justification, deliberate favoritism by the provincial government to the Catholics.<sup>63</sup> One of the best examples of labor defeating its own ambitions through the division is found in connection with the endeavors for many years to pass an adequate workmen's compensation act. Admitting their failure to accomplish legislation directly, the two labor bodies began to call for a royal commission to investigate and report. But in their divided condition they have lacked the strength, in the face of the opposition of insurance companies, lawyers, etc., to get such a commission appointed.<sup>64</sup>

From the point of view of the federal government, Minister of Labor Robertson stated the situation very well in his famous unrequested lecture to the Catholic Federal Bureau members on the occasion of their visit to Ottawa in January, 1920, when he requested them to "honestly and earnestly endeavor to find some method whereby [their] organization can work in more complete harmony with the other organizations representing labor in this country, and at least stop the growing friction that exists. . . . Unless there is harmony and unity of action [he added] the government is placed in a most embarrassing position in dealing with the presentations that are made."<sup>65</sup>

If we turn from considering the matter from the point of view of trade unionism and examine it in relation to the future of Canadian democratic government and the life of the Domin-

<sup>63</sup> See utterances of Premier Taschereau, quoted in *Canadian Annual Review* (1922), pp. 680-81. Cf. also *Proceedings of Thirty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 86.

<sup>64</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-eighth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 83.

<sup>65</sup> *House of Commons Debates* (April 6, 1921), p. 1712.

ion as a united people, this new force making for a more complete Quebec bloc can only be regarded as unfortunate. After the schools and the press, trade unionism has come to be one of the greatest of our educative forces and a leading agency in the formation of public opinion. It would seem to be a distinct loss to the commonwealth if this most recent avenue of communication and mental influencing were to be closed, or reduced, like the others, to a condition of fractional functioning.

## CHAPTER XI

### RISE AND DECLINE OF THE ONE BIG UNION IN CANADA

The One Big Union sprang suddenly into prominence during the spring and summer of 1919 with its field of activities for the most part west of Lake Superior. It is avowedly a class movement based upon an expression of perpetual hostility to the "present system of production for profit"; and it is in favor of industrial and sectional unionism as opposed to organization by crafts. Its structure differs from that of the I.W.W., which carried similar radical tenets into Canada some years earlier, in that its secondary units are on geographical rather than industrial lines; the idea being that by this means it could in time of a trial of strength close down all the industries at a given point and cut off the sources of profit to all the employers there at the same time. This, it is agreed, would work an immediate hardship upon the employers and would bring them to their knees in the shortest space of time.<sup>1</sup>

The reliance of the O.B.U. is upon industrial rather than political action; and it wholly disavows any use of legislative lobbying for laws favorable to labor. Both in structure and in method, therefore, as well as in its basic attitude toward property in capital goods, it stands opposed to the main body of Canadian unionism as represented by the internationals; and it is not surprising that from the beginning it required its units that were affiliated with these bodies to sever the connection. For a time the new organization made rapid inroads upon the established labor movement and threatened the supremacy of the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Kavanagh in *Ninth Annual Report of British Columbia Federation of Labor*, p. 52.

Canada Trades and Labor Congress. But, deprived by the law of several of its leaders, with its chief weapon, the sympathetic strike, brought into disfavor and under legal condemnation after the great test at Winnipeg, and finally confronted with the steady hostility of the international organizations, its success proved to be short lived.

#### I. THE UNDERLYING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC UNREST

Before taking up the actual formation and launching of the new movement it will be well to get a picture of the mental attitude of labor in Western Canada in the period immediately preceding. It is doubtless true that the organization itself was the product of a few minds working mainly from Vancouver and Winnipeg; but it is equally true that this half-dozen men could not have swung two conventions and pledged the delegates from four provinces to work for the breaking of old connections and the adoption of a new experiment had there not been a background of discontent in a large element of the workers. These leaders themselves are loud in their disavowal of the charge that they seized an opportunity to carry through a radical program of their own invention, but claim rather that they were instruments of the time, being those most capable of appreciating the inadequacies of the old machinery and of proposing new methods and a new organization expressive of the needs of the hour.

To the writer it appears that the success of the O.B.U. in getting the grip that it did upon the laborers of Western Canada was due primarily to three factors, viz., leadership, foreign influences, and unrest and dissatisfaction among the working classes.

In the first place, then, it is necessary to take account of the presence of a radical band of men whose purposeful activities as a group date from a time shortly after the Quebec meeting of the Canada Trades Congress (1918), but who had been alive to the possibilities of change for some time previous. These leaders were not generally aliens, as has often been asserted, though

doubtless they depended to some extent upon an alien following. They were for the most part men well known in Canadian labor circles before 1919, a majority, in fact, having represented their various organizations at the convention of the Trades Congress the year before. Several of them had an experience with labor organization in Great Britain before coming to Canada.<sup>2</sup> After the West had failed to carry its program at the Quebec congress this radical wing of the western workers got together for the bringing in of a new order; and by the time of the arrival of the conventions of March, 1919, they had sounded the possibilities of the situation and stood ready to carry through a definite program.

The second factor was the magic worked by the first representations of the Russian experiment. Introduced upon a ground well worked by socialist orators, and stimulated to greater effectiveness by the government ban upon radical literature, the idea of the workers' soviet took a great hold upon the laborers. Mass meetings in Winnipeg ended with cheers for the Russian Republic. The "dictatorship of the proletariat," it was pointed out at the convention of the British Columbia Federation, was in truth a form of government which gave adequate representation to all workers. In support, too, of the radical outlook were the declara-

<sup>2</sup>To mention some of the more prominent, R. B. Russell, at one time a member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers of Glasgow, was at the time of our story the secretary of District No. 2 of the International Association of Machinists. R. J. Tallon was president of the same district, which embraced the railroad machinists of Canada. J. Kavanagh and W. A. Pritchard were members of the Longshoremen's Association, both prominent in the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council and leading advocates of Socialism on the Coast. V. R. Midgley was secretary of the Vancouver Council; J. R. Knight was a longstanding member of the carpenters' union; and R. J. Johns and J. Naylor were connected respectively with the machinists of Winnipeg and the United Mine Workers of Cumberland, British Columbia. This list will be sufficient to show the distribution geographically and by trade of the men most prominent in the organization of the O.B.U.

tions and activities of British labor at this time, as shown by the frequent reference in convention debates.

The last factor to be named in this causal series was the attitude of disaffection with things as they were at the time in labor circles, and a general impatience with old methods. The dissatisfaction may be said to have asserted itself in two ways: first as a protest against what was held to be political oppression; second, as an attempt to improve industrial organization and method. These two matters will be taken up in turn.

As a result of the passage of the Conscription Act in 1917, the internment of enemy aliens during the war, and, finally, the passage of certain "orders-in-council" by the Dominion government banning what was called objectionable literature and foreign organizations and requiring the arrest of persons belonging to the latter or in possession of such literature, there were held in confinement in Western Canada many aliens, conscientious objectors, and other classes of political prisoners. The matter was a sore point with a considerable section of labor. Naturally, a large part of the "citizen enemies" thus held were drawn from the ranks of the radicals. The Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council—itsself a Socialist body—carried a resolution to the convention of the Trades and Labor Congress in September, 1918, demanding that representations be made to the Minister of Justice requesting him to consider the matter of the temporary release of "conscientious objectors"<sup>3</sup> in order to work on farms,

<sup>3</sup> Some time previous the *Western Labor News* and the *British Columbia Federationist*, official organs, respectively, of the Winnipeg and Vancouver trades councils, had started a campaign of protest against those orders-in-council, by whose penalty provisions men were now languishing in prison. Remarking that the war was over, they challenged the continuance of operation of this form of emergency legislation authorized by the "war measure act." (The order-in-council is a device by which the Governor-General in Council may put into operation measures considered immediately necessary, without submitting them to Parliament.) No hesitation was entertained in pointing out that the Canada Trades and Labor Congress would do nothing to hurry the repeal of the obnoxious orders. Both papers were called to account by the government censor.

etc. The motion, while ostensibly having for its purpose the increase of food production, was apparently considered as capable of other interpretation. It was voted down after a lengthy discussion by a roll-call vote of 99-90.<sup>4</sup> Such a defeat, however, was not well calculated to dispel the sentiment which prompted the measure. A second resolution indicating disaffection or distrust of both government and labor leaders was introduced by delegates from the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council and met with no better success. It charged the government with using the power of the state in the interests of the employing class and with being antagonistic to labor; it further stated that it was buying labor officials with positions and it advocated an amendment to the constitution of the Trades Congress to the effect that no person holding any office or appointment under the government should be eligible to hold office.<sup>5</sup>

A further cause of political ferment was the continued hostility of the Canadian government toward the Russian Bolsheviks as evidenced by the dispatching of troops and ammunition from the Port of Vancouver. Stories were rife of the forceful impressment of soldiers into this service against their will, while the longshoremen declared they only loaded the munitions because they knew that if they refused they would lose the work to others protected by government forces.<sup>6</sup> It was generally charged, even from the platform, that these troops and equipment were being sent to protect the investment of capitalists of the allied nations.<sup>7</sup> Considerable advertisement was given to all these matters through the agency of the Labor Church, an organization with branches in a number of western cities.

<sup>4</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-fourth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, Resolution 48.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Report of Ninth Annual Convention of British Columbia Federation of Labor*, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Report of Winnipeg general strike.

Political unrest seems to have reached its climax in a mass meeting held at the Walker Theater, Winnipeg, on December 22. This was called by the Trades and Labor Council in conjunction with the Socialist Party of Canada for the purpose of "getting the facts before the public" and generally of giving expression to the state of mind of the discontented elements. The meeting, which was presided over by a city alderman and addressed by prominent socialists and leaders of the "progressives" in the Labor Council, passed three resolutions which crystallized the political demands. The first protested against further operation of orders-in-council; the second called for the withdrawal of troops from Russia; the last demanded the release of political prisoners. Needless to say, at this meeting, as well as a second held some weeks later, feeling ran high.

Hand in hand with the post-war political unrest went industrial dissatisfaction. Gross disparity existed between the immense rise in the cost of living and increases in wages, while the outlook for the future was pictured as dark indeed for the worker, owing to the disbanding of armies and the return of both soldiers and munition workers to the regular activities of civilian life. No part of the Dominion, it was pointed out, would suffer from this phase of reconstruction like the West; no province had given so many men in proportion to its population to the war effort as British Columbia; and the West as a whole had contributed more generously than the East. This discontent and fear found expression again in many quarters in a fervid denunciation of craft unionism and in condemnation of the general attitude and out-of-date methods of the Canada Trades and Labor Congress, whose point of view, it was contended, was that of the conservative East, due to the fact that the conventions were usually held there and the organizations west of the Great Lakes could not afford to send delegates such a long distance. Craft unions, it was argued, had given abundant evidence of their inefficiency. Commencing with the war years, in spite of the fact

of a favorable labor market, they found it impossible to advance wages without striking; and when they did strike they found it necessary, in order to attain any degree of success, to fall back upon the trades councils for sympathetic action by other crafts. Such had been the experience of the workers employed by the British Columbia Electric Railway in 1916, of the firemen of the City of Edmonton, and of certain unions in Calgary.

In line with this opinion eight separate resolutions, all containing practically the same substance, were introduced into the Quebec convention of the Canada Trades and Labor Congress, calling upon that body to take a referendum vote on the question of reorganizing the Canadian labor movement into a "modern and scientific organization by Industry instead of by Craft"; and, following this, if the referendum carried, with the appointment of a committee representative of each industry to draw up a constitution to submit to the membership. These resolutions coming from the Winnipeg and Transcona trades and labor councils and from six different lodges of the International Association of Machinists all met with defeat. Another resolution, submitted by the Winnipeg Council, dealing with the matter of expected unemployment consequent upon the setting free of workers into the labor market at the close of the war, requested "that the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada take cognizance of such an emergency and immediately take steps to promulgate a six-hour day and a five-day week for all labor in the Dominion so as to assist in absorbing the surplus labor and safeguard against unemployment."<sup>8</sup> This measure likewise failed of entertainment by the congress, the whole matter being left to the incoming executive for the exercise of its judgment.<sup>9</sup>

Just how widespread among the working classes of the western provinces was the condition of mind that found expression in

<sup>8</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-fourth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 140.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

the activities here pictured it is impossible to state with any degree of accuracy. It would seem that in Winnipeg, Canada's most foreign city and the great railway center of the West, the voice of conservatism was, at this early stage, little heard. In British Columbia, with its coastal industries and its mines, only a small minority gave battle at the meeting of the provincial federation for the retention of the main outlines of the old order. As for Alberta, its delegates at the western conferences (hereafter to be discussed), though looking to remedies different from those finally adopted by the convention, registered a rather general political dissatisfaction. A resolution sponsored by the provincial federation protested that hundreds of men were languishing in jails simply because they had the courage of their convictions, while another resolution demanded a general strike to force the government to provide a remedy in case it failed to act voluntarily after an appeal by the Canada Trades Congress. Taking it all in all, the One Big Union was largely an outcome of the war, with its resulting dislocations in industry, its ideas, and repressions.

## II. CALLING THE ONE BIG UNION INTO BEING

Following their failure to carry their measures at the Quebec convention of the Canada Trades Congress, the western delegates held a meeting and, with one dissenting voice, voted in favor of recommending to all the labor organizations of the four provinces that a conference of representatives from these bodies should be held before the next convention of the congress. It was stated at the time that the proposal was not intended as a secessional or separatist movement, but was designed to formulate a policy which should more truly represent the progressive views of western labor, and which, by united action on the part of the western delegates, would secure sufficient support from the eastern organizations to make that policy in some degree effective. A committee with David Rees, of the United Mine Work-

ers, as chairman, and V. Midgley, of the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council, as secretary was named to call the conference and arrange the details. The matter was taken in hand by the British Columbia Federation of Labor and calls were sent out from Vancouver for a meeting of representatives to be held in Calgary, Alberta, on March 13, 1919. The British Columbia federation meanwhile, fully alive to the importance of coming events, postponed its own convention, which was to have been held in January, to the tenth of March, and named Calgary likewise as its place of meeting.<sup>10</sup>

When the British Columbia Federation assembled in convention at Calgary W. A. Pritchard introduced a resolution from the floor announcing a complete change in the policy of the Federation involving organization along industrial lines for forcing "by virtue of their industrial strength" such demands as the new organizations might consider necessary and repudiating further efforts at persuading legislatures to pass laws favorable to labor. The convention, after some discussion, adopted the resolution and, before closing, amended the constitution in keeping with the new policy and instructed the executive committee to take a vote of the membership for ratification. After this seven other measures were brought in by the resolutions committee and adopted, their substance in total being a forceful demand upon the government for a redress of grievances; the adoption of a six-hour day and five-day week; a repudiation of connection with the internationals and the organization of all workers by in-

<sup>10</sup> Subsequent events go to show that in the period intervening between September and March the machinery of the British Columbia Federation and of the Vancouver Trades Council had been used effectively to canvass the ground in British Columbia with a view to ascertaining where the different organizations stood with respect to a much more radical program than that which had been entertained by the western group at Quebec; and further, looking beyond British Columbia, the indications are that the left wing, centered in Winnipeg and on the Coast, was not altogether in the dark with regard to the possibility of extending the action taken by British Columbia to cover the whole West.

dustries; and finally reliance upon the general strike to enforce demands. The three days of the convention were given up to the discussion of these resolutions, other measures sent in from the affiliated organizations and dealing with the regular matters of business being simply read and referred to the incoming executive in case the new policy failed to carry with the membership. Although the impotence of the British Columbia unions to carry through alone a scheme of industrial unionism in the face of international opposition, and especially to force a 30-hour week while the rest of Canada and the United States remained under the old working day, was well argued by a few of the older members, the convention declared itself in favor of the one province playing a lone hand, if necessary, in bringing in the new policies. Nevertheless, in apparent anticipation of seeing the thing started on a wider basis, the convention passed a motion that the eight resolutions that had occupied the British Columbia meeting should be brought before the larger conference immediately to be held; and it is noteworthy that not only did the delegates to the former meeting serve also as representatives of British Columbia at the latter, but that the same man functioned as chairman of the resolutions committee for both conventions. A comparison of the reports of the two conventions shows how completely the spirit and purpose which expressed itself in the work of the smaller body was dominant again in the activities of the Conference. In fact, except for certain changes in the wording to provide for the difference in the field of application, many of the resolutions are exact duplicates.

The Western Labor Conference, held in the Labor Temple of Calgary, was believed by many of those who attended its sessions to be the most important labor convention ever held in Canada. In all, it consisted of 239 delegates from labor bodies territorially distributed as follows: Alberta, 89; British Columbia, 85; Saskatchewan, 17; Manitoba, 46; and Ontario, 2. Mr. R. J. Tallon, vice-president of the Calgary Trades and Labor

Council, was chosen as presiding officer, and V. R. Midgley as secretary. A resolution committee was appointed with J. Kavanagh, of Vancouver, as chairman; also a committee on policy, headed by R. J. Johns, of Winnipeg. In spite of the assurances of moderation given at Quebec, the meeting soon gave evidence of its intention to carry through a program much more drastic, and, so far as the established labor movement was concerned, most disruptive. Before it was over it had evolved a complete plan for a separate organization, with principles and policies entirely opposed to those of the Canada Trades Congress, and had set up machinery for carrying that plan to fulfilment, provided it met with the approval of a sufficient proportion of the labor organizations.<sup>11</sup>

Coming now to an analysis of the main work of the conference, we find Resolution 4, introduced by the British Columbia Federation of Labor, reading as follows:

Whereas a general censorship has been instituted against freedom of speech . . . ; be it resolved that this convention demand full freedom of speech, press and assembly, and demand the release of all political prisoners and the removal of all disabilities and restrictions now upon the working

<sup>11</sup> It is a point for controversialists to argue how far the main body of resolutions dealt with by the conference subsequent to the passage of the first three should be treated as an integral part of O.B.U. history. It can be said with truth that the organization of the latter was not yet an established fact: that it existed only as a plan in the minds of its promoters. Nevertheless I take it that since they were sponsored in the conference by the same parties that carried through the resolution providing for the new organization, and inasmuch as some of them were to be enforced by the anticipated machinery and membership of the latter as part of its policy, it is only right to include them in the story. It is true, beyond a doubt, that some of these dedicated to the project of forceful control of the government in certain matters, and to comparisons intended to weaken its prestige in the minds of the workers, added weight to the "Bolsheviki" and "alien" charges that brought so much condemnation upon the O.B.U. from the public. A few weeks later it was just such statements uttered in the highly charged atmosphere of Winnipeg that were to rob the unborn organization of some of its most enthusiastic leaders, if indeed some of the utterances at these Calgary conventions were not themselves instrumental in bringing these men to prison.

class organizations, and that a referendum asking for a general strike, be taken on these questions to become effective June 1.

A motion following immediately upon the passage of this resolution provided that its substance be forwarded at once to the Canada Trades and Labor Congress.

Resolution 5, also from the British Columbia Federation, after declaring that "the legitimate aspirations of the labor movement are repeatedly obstructed by existing political forms," went on to say:

This convention expresses its open conviction that the system of industrial soviet control by selection of representatives from industries is more efficient and of greater political value than the present system of government by selection from districts. This convention declares its full acceptance of the principle of "Proletarian Dictatorship" as being absolute and efficient for the transformation of capitalist private property to communal wealth.

The measure ended with fraternal greetings to the Russian government, the Spartacans of Germany, etc. It was carried unanimously.

Resolution 8, condensed from measures introduced by the Federations of Alberta and British Columbia and the "Women's Labor League," demanded "immediate withdrawal of all allied troops from Russia" and put the conference on record as being "in favor of calling a general strike on June 1, should the Allies persist in their attempt to overthrow the Soviet administration in Russia or Germany or in any other country in which it is or may be established. . . ."

Resolution 6, introduced by the British Columbia Federation, offered a solution for the anticipated unemployment problem by providing for a six-hour day and five-day week to become operative after June 1.

Later resolutions were passed in condemnation of Mr. Gompers and his lobbying methods and of P. M. Draper, secretary of the Canada Trades Congress, for his refusal of Canadian at-

tendance at the International Labor Conference at Berne because German and Austrian workers were present.<sup>12</sup>

An examination of all the measures thus far mentioned shows in what close relation this meeting stood to current unrest and impatience.

We turn now to a consideration of the activities of the conference bearing directly upon the organization of the O.B.U. The provision for this is made in the first three resolutions, but inasmuch as the substance of the first two is included in the preamble later to be quoted, it is unnecessary to repeat them here.<sup>13</sup> Suffice it to quote one striking clause contained in the second, which does not appear again, to the effect that "we place ourselves . . . on record as being opposed to the innocuity of labor leaders lobbying Parliament for palliatives that do not palliate"; and also to note that the language is more forceful and comprehensive here where it advocates "reorganization . . . along industrial lines, so that by virtue of their industrial strength, the workers may be better prepared *to enforce any demand they consider essential to their maintenance and well-being*," than it is when these points find expression some months later.

Resolution 3, introduced by The British Columbia Federation, recommended to the bodies represented that they sever their affiliation with their international organizations and co-operate in the formation of an industrial organization of all workers. To this end it was resolved that a circular letter outlining a proposed plan of organization should be sent out and that a referendum be taken upon the wishes of the organizations with respect to the same. An amendment was passed reading "that the question be submitted to the entire Canadian membership, the ballots and returns to be segregated at Port Arthur as dividing

<sup>12</sup> In this matter the Conference was apparently misinformed. See *Tenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*.

<sup>13</sup> *Infra.*, p. 386.

line between East and West." How far this survey of the East was actually attempted at this time we are not told, but we know that no account was taken of returns east of Manitoba when the returns were given out.

At the closing session of the convention there was considerable discussion as to what would be considered an indorsement of the new policy by the union membership; and it was finally decided that the British Columbia method should be used as a guide by the central committee. This called for a "majority vote by organizations comprising the vital trades, such as transportation, metal trades and mines"; and required the locals in taking the ballot vote to count in the affirmative members failing to return their blanks. This method of measurement, which had been challenged in the British Columbia convention, was strenuously opposed at this meeting, especially by the Alberta representatives, delegate Broatch of Calgary ably contending that an organization of all workers should reject the domination by favored minorities such as was involved in this distinction among trades. R. B. Russell, in a fighting speech, called the meeting back to a sense of its duty in not casting doubts at this late date upon the success of industrial unionism. He characterized the action of the opposition as "an attempt to get press publicity to show a reactionary move in the convention" where previously all had been unanimous.

Probably the matter of most stubborn disagreement at the conference was that of the attitude to be taken in the new organization toward political action. The Alberta delegates for the most part came to the meeting expecting to make this a fundamental part of the general plan of operation. The Alberta Federation of Labor, itself operating under a socialist profession of faith, sent in a resolution (No. 21 of the conference) declaring for the "formation of a political party with the object in view of uniting labor and kindred organizations into a homogeneous political party; believing that a united political labor party is a

necessary adjunct to the development of our industrial organizations and to the attainment of our national ideals." There is in this measure a suggestion of the co-operation of the labor forces with the farmers which was soon to become an important factor in provincial politics in English-speaking Canada and to find reflection in federal affairs in the third or Progressive Party. The Calgary delegates, led by Mr. Broatch, battled hard for the political principle, arguing that striking alone was not enough and constituted no sufficient expression of labor's point of view. They reminded the conference that England had achieved the eight-hour day through the political weapon; while, as for this country, admitting that labor representation in the past had been a failure, this was because labor members had been elected to carry on the present system. Henceforth they would be put in to kill that system and would be elected with that as their policy and platform. They would be sent to parliament with a new policy, a new idea, and educated to a new conception of life.

Delegate Kavanagh opposed the resolution, drawing a distinction between "politics" and "parliamentarianism."

Power in politics [he answered] is not found in Parliament but in the country prior to the election. Politics only exist where there are classes, and any action taken by a class in defense of its interest is political action. Hence you cannot define any particular action as political, but any action . . . . used to control political power in order to utilize it for the benefit of that class—that is political action, and it matters not what method it takes.

A Vancouver delegate with a background of experience in the United States could not see "where workers had ever gotten anything through political action"; and V. G. Midgley contended that to adopt a political action measure would be to put the convention in a negative position with respect to preceding resolutions, which named industrial action as the important feature of the new movement. When the vote was finally called for, the day went to the advocates of "direct action," and the nature of the O.B.U. was thus determined.

The Western Conference, acting through its policy committee, provided the machinery for taking the referendum, carrying on the necessary propaganda, and in general putting into execution the wishes of the convention. To this end it appointed a "central committee" of five, chosen irrespective of geographical location, and four assisting committees, one chosen by the delegates of each province (the two representatives from Ontario elected to become a part of the Manitoba group for this purpose). The central committee was to look after the preparation and sending out of the vote, while the provincial committees were to be responsible for the propaganda and for the taking of the vote in their respective provinces. The question of how the vote was to be taken in Eastern Canada was left rather hazily to the central committee, which was to function as a standing executive until displaced by a permanent organization and regular officers. After the returns from the referendum vote were received, the central committee was to call a conference of representatives of trades councils and district boards, it being considered necessary to use these existing forms in order to complete the plans of the new organization.<sup>14</sup>

The central committee organized by electing V. R. Midgley as secretary, and became known as the "general executive board" of the One Big Union. It immediately proceeded to prepare bal-

<sup>14</sup> In order to meet the expenses necessary to carry through these various steps the committee was authorized to appeal to the trades councils and district boards affiliated for a payment of two cents per member. The optimism of the Conference is indicated in the smallness of this per capita tax as well as in the basis of representation planned for the future conference, the instructions allowing only one delegate for 5,000 members. The central committee, elected from the floor of the convention, consisted of W. A. Pritchard, Vancouver Trades and Labor Council; R. J. Johns, Winnipeg, Trades and Labor Council; J. R. Knight, Edmonton, U.B. of Carpenters; V. R. Midgley, Vancouver, Trades and Labor Council; James Naylor, U.M.W., Cumberland, British Columbia. No one was named as chairman.

The provincial committees were presided over by the following: British Columbia, J. Kavanagh; Alberta, C. E. Berg; Saskatchewan, R. Hazeltone; Manitoba, R. B. Russell.

Cf. *Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 24.

lots and to have them distributed for a vote on the adoption of the principle of the One Big Union. Coupled with this ballot was another asking for a vote on a general strike to take place on June 1 to establish the six-hour day (and to enforce certain political demands, as previously noted).

While the referendum was being taken a number of bulletins were issued by the executive board and distributed as supporting propaganda. Contributions were solicited to aid in the campaign, and many locals of the international organizations answered the call. Lodge No. 777 of the International Association of Machinists donated \$400 to the cause in May, and had its charter revoked as a result for propagating secession and thus violating the constitution of the order. Following this an injunction against the lodge officers compelled the return to headquarters of all books, funds, etc., and a new local, No. 692, was formed in competition with the old, which now operated as Machinists Union No. 1 under a charter from the One Big Union. Reports published from time to time in the western newspapers stated that the referendum was going overwhelmingly in favor of the new organization; but in the East not much enthusiasm was manifested, the literature from the executive board being in many instances passed over without being read. On May 23 Secretary Midgley sent out a call to the central councils and district boards announcing that the vote of the vital industries between Port Arthur, Ontario, and Victoria, British Columbia, had surpassed all anticipation in its general indorsement of the One Big Union; that a large number of organizations desired to become part of the new movement at once; and that "the central committee, in accordance with the instructions of the Calgary Convention," had decided to call the conference of representatives of the bodies addressed to meet in Calgary June 4 for the purpose of drawing up the plans of the new organization.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> According to Secretary Midgley, at the end of May, taking the 258 unions that had sent in returns, 188 had voted in favor, and 70 against. Considered in terms of members, out of a total of 41,365, the favorable vote, comprised in the

## III. THE CONSTITUTION AND ORGANIZATION

The conference thus called did not meet on schedule time, being postponed a week, probably on account of events growing out of the Winnipeg strike. Its chief contribution was the drawing up and adoption of a constitution. The preamble, after devoting a paragraph to a sample rendering of the Marxian statement of the class struggle, read as follows:

As industry develops and ownership becomes concentrated more and more into fewer hands, as the control of the economic forces of society become more and more the sole property of imperialistic finance, it becomes apparent that the workers, in order to sell their labor power with any degree of success, must extend their forms of organization in accordance with changing methods. Compelled to organize for self defense, they are further compelled to educate themselves in preparation for the social change which economic development will produce whether they seek it or not.

The One Big Union therefore seeks to organize the wage worker, not according to craft but according to industry; according to class and class needs; and calls upon all workers irrespective of nationality, sex, or craft to organize into a worker's organization, so that they may be enabled to more successfully carry on the everyday fight over wages, hours of work, etc., and prepare themselves for the day when production for profit shall be replaced by production for use.<sup>16</sup>

It will not be out of place to note here that the later preambles differ at only one point from this first expression in that they ease away in varying degree in the declaration for industrial unionism, while still emphasizing organization by class. Ap-

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188 unions, was 24,239; the unfavorable comprised, in the 70 unions, was 5,975; unaccounted for, 11,151. Reports received by the Department of Labor at Ottawa somewhat earlier showed the vote turning largely against the O.B.U. in the province of Alberta, but that the miners for practically the whole district were voting in favor and welcoming cleavage with the international (*Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, pp. 25-26).

<sup>16</sup> It has been pointed out that in comparison with some organizations operating on this continent this statement of purpose is rather mild and harmless, and it may well be said that in the arrangement of its clauses, as well as in its actual statements, it breathes out less fire than the resolutions of the Western Conference passed some months before.

parently the delegates sensed that their profession in this respect was not entirely in accord with fact. In place of the first two clauses in the last paragraph quoted, we find that at one time the phrase "not according to craft, but according to industry" was dropped altogether;<sup>17</sup> but still later the part was amended to read, "The O.B.U., therefore, seeks to organize the wage workers according to class and class needs, to the end that the utmost solidarity and power may be secured in every organized locality, *with adequate provision for industrial organization where the needs of the workers may thus be served.*" The change amounts to an admission that the garment must be cut according to the cloth. Later leaders apparently have found, as the organizers did in the first instance, that it is more compatible with the success of the movement to recognize bodies already grown up and more or less adapted to the geography and the lay of economic life in the country than to carry out a thoroughgoing scheme of representation by industries.

In actual practice the local units of the O.B.U. organize by industry where practicable; but in small towns and in isolated places where few workers are employed, conglomerate units embracing all employments are permitted. The local branches, where the circumstances allow, are grouped in central councils and district boards by means of a system of meeting of representatives, and these secondary units again send their delegates to the annual convention and have individual representation on the general executive board. Where conditions do not permit of this secondary grouping, the locals send their delegates directly to the general convention. The first constitution had a clause regarding conglomerate branches, to the effect that their members should be controlled by the central organization of the industry to which they belonged, but the words have since been deleted. A central labor council embraces in its jurisdiction the local units in any town or city. A district board is defined as "a dele-

<sup>17</sup> See *Twelfth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 210.

gated body elected from units or camps in a certain industrial region for the purpose of taking care of the internal affairs of their industry." The jurisdiction of each of these bodies is designated by a certificate from the general executive board. District boards and central labor councils have the right to send one delegate per thousand members to the annual convention, and each secondary body representing more than one thousand members elects a delegate to the executive board.<sup>18</sup>

The executive board, in addition to delegates elected thus by the secondary units, consists of five members chosen from the floor of the convention. It chooses its own chairman and hires a secretary from outside its own number. Considerable history attaches to the constitution of the executive board. At first, in addition to a chairman and a secretary, it was to consist of representatives of the various industries included in the organization. Then the convention of January, 1920, decided to elect members from the four leading industries—coal mining, metal mining, lumbering, and railroad transportation—along with four representatives from territorial divisions. Finally this compromise of the two principles was given up in favor of the present system.

An interesting feature of the O.B.U. is the constitutional arrangement by means of which, while providing for a certain measure of central control, it insures the membership at the same time against abuse of power by their officers. In addition to the executive board's control of strike support there is the provision that all central labor councils, district boards, and isolated units shall submit to it regularly reports of their activities, membership in good standing, and financial condition, and also the arrangement for collecting dues through sale of stamps. The per capita tax of 15 cents per month is paid by the members purchasing "monthly dues stamps" which are issued exclusively by

<sup>18</sup> Prior to the meeting of January, 1920, the conventions were called for semiannually and the basis of representation was one delegate for each two thousand.

the board. Favoring decentralization on the other hand and providing a check upon officers are the following clauses:

1. The general secretary shall render to the secondary bodies a quarterly financial report, duly certified by chartered accountants.

2. "The General Executive Board shall . . . . transmit matters of importance received from Central Labor Councils, District Boards, or isolated units throughout the entire organization for their consideration," and in case of prospective general strike must get a majority vote of the membership.

3. Central labor councils or district boards shall have the right to determine in some measure the activities of their own members upon the executive board. Clause 9 reads: "The members of the G. E. B. may act as general organizers or in a consultative capacity at the discretion of the Central Labor Council or District Board they represent." Once engaged in general organizing work, however, they shall be under the direction of the general executive board.

4. Either his local or his secondary unit may recall a member of the general executive board by withdrawing his credentials. The right of the local unit to cancel such credentials is, however, subject to investigation by the central council or district board to which he bore them. It is noteworthy, however, that there is no recall—even as there is no election of officers by vote of the entire membership.<sup>19</sup>

With regard to the settlement of disputes, when trouble arises which the local unit affected cannot settle, the matter is referred in writing to the secondary body under whose jurisdiction the local comes; this body failing to effect a settlement it is referred, if considered of sufficient importance, to the general executive board. The latter, if it considers the case of sufficient merit, shall refer it to the various central labor councils and district boards. A majority vote of the whole organization is required before the

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Savage, *Industrial Unionism*, p. 194.

general executive board is empowered to call a strike of all members. No constitutional barrier, however, stands in the way of any branch calling a strike in its own district or industry on its own responsibility, and a local whose case has been thrown out by its central council or district board may carry it directly to the general executive board for consideration. A further clause provides that O.B.U. strikes shall be supported by use of the boycott, both direct and indirect in nature, involving the co-operation of the whole membership and calculated to cripple traffic in the products of the industry affected.

Other features peculiar to the O.B.U. are (1) the maintenance of a special fund for carrying on propaganda, one-third of the monthly dues to the general executive board being set aside for that purpose, and (2) the provision for paying the transportation expenses of the various delegates to the convention and charging the same back to all units in proportion to membership. This latter arrangement had been demanded by the western delegates to the Canada Trades Congress in 1918, and its failure to meet with the approval of that convention had helped to confirm them in their charge of unfairness entertained against the East.

#### IV. THE WINNIPEG STRIKE

When the Western Conference was adjourned, the executive, as has been noted, was to take a referendum on the O.B.U. proposition and to link with the latter on the ballot the subject of a general strike to be launched on June 1 to enforce the six-hour day and certain other demands. But some weeks before the time set the strike weapon was being tried out in earnest over a considerable part of the field. This was the famous Winnipeg episode, which, developing out of the background of ordinary strikes, soon came to draw in sympathetically many trades and callings not directly concerned, both in Winnipeg and other western cities.

How far the O.B.U. was concerned in bringing about the

general stoppage is a moot point; it certainly cannot be charged with causing the trouble in the first instance, as this is clearly traceable to ordinary demands in the course of wage bargaining, the building trades striking for a wage increase and the metal trades associating with this a demand for recognition, and both walking out only after lengthy negotiations. But when the matter was taken in hand by the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council, whose progressive wing was largely led by the same men who were to the fore in the Manitoba section of the O.B.U., the course of events goes to show that the temporary machinery of the latter, such as existed at the time, was brought into action with the intention of testing it out.<sup>20</sup>

The building and metal trades went on strike at the beginning of May, 1919. Each through its council then proceeded to bring the matter before the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council, which was claimed at this time to be one of the most progressive organizations in Canada. The latter body at once laid the matter before the representatives of the affiliated unions, and in the discussion that ensued over the proposal of a general strike there was not a dissenting voice. A referendum vote was then

<sup>20</sup> This is not meant to imply that the general strike was an act of the O.B.U. We must remember that this organization was only in process of birth. It lacked any formal constitution, although its policies were well defined and its name was on everybody's tongue. Action was yet to be taken with regard to the referendum, though we may assume that reports were not lacking of the success of the vote. Nor should we forget that other progressive labor elements played their part in the encounter and helped to gain for the strikers the confidence and sympathy of soldiers and public. What we do claim is that this was a test of the O.B.U. technique: it turned the spot-light on the general sympathetic strike, featured geographically, and in some measure industrially, as a weapon to force an industrial concession, in all its strength and in all its weakness. Or, if we assume—the Crown prosecutors did in their relations with the arrested leaders—that this was an attempt at political revolution, the events of the portentous five weeks may not be without their lesson as to the possibilities and dangers of the general strike used for this purpose, though one can see in fancy where the leaders, studiously seeking to carry through a revolution, might well have used their powers more effectively at times.

taken of the whole membership, this resulting in an overwhelming majority in favor of the action.<sup>21</sup>

Those who defend the action of the Winnipeg unions in this matter against the charge of precipitate action contend that the whole subject was well studied and the causes found sufficient. The workers in the building trades were only demanding a living wage, while as for the metal trades—and here was the sorest spot—the three leading companies refused to consider the issues with the Metal Trades Council, taking the stand that “labor had no right to organize, and refusing to recognize any union the workers should form. The most they were willing to do was to meet a committee of their men, provided they had no connection with the trades-union movement.”<sup>22</sup>

The events of the strike may be briefly indicated. In all, between thirty and thirty-five thousand workers went out at Winnipeg. On May 15 two bodies were organized, one by the workers, termed the “Central Strike Committee,” the other the “Citizens’ Committee of One Thousand,” an organization avowedly representing the interests of the third party, but from the first opposed to the strike, which it held to be no longer an affair between the metal trades and other employers and their workers, but an issue of “the constitutional rights of the citizens at large.”<sup>23</sup> The Central Strike Committee began at once to place the city on a strike basis industrially and commercially. “They called out in sympathetic strike the workers in the civic, fire, water, health, light, and power departments”; also “such workers as the telephone operators, the postal clerks, the Winnipeg Electric Railway employees, and many others. While, in a sense, they paralyzed all industry, they provided for the necessities of the citizens. The domestic water service was allowed; the police force remained on duty; bread, milk, and meat were distributed,

<sup>21</sup> W. S. Ryder, “Canada’s Industrial Crisis of 1919,” unpublished M.A. thesis at University of British Columbia.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

and requirements of the hospitals and of the sick were looked after. Their object was avowedly to seize control of the city. Whatever activities were in progress were permitted by the authority of the strike committee."<sup>24</sup>

This in brief was the situation at the end of the third week in May; but now the various governments intervened. The federal government sent the Minister of Labor and the acting Minister of Justice to Winnipeg. The postal employees were given a definite time to get back to work or be replaced. The city council compelled all civic employees who were to be allowed to remain on the city pay-roll to sign an agreement declaring their freedom in the future from "any union which is directly or indirectly in affiliation with any other organization, to whose orders, directions, or recommendations such union or association, or its members, are obliged to agree to observe or confirm, or act in concert with"; and further stipulating that they would "not take part in or support or favor what is known as a sympathetic strike."

These measures were met on the part of the strike committee by the addition of a third demand to labor's "irreducible minimum." The three were now: (1) the right of collective bargaining, (2) a living wage, (3) the reinstatement of all strikers, without prejudice.<sup>25</sup> The situation was complicated in a sense by the presence of many returned soldiers whose organized support was sought by both parties to the conflict, but was lent for the most part to the strikers, a series of giant parades waiting on the provincial government from time to time and demanding that it express its approval of the principle of collective bargaining.

These more spectacular happenings were interspersed with efforts at conciliation. First a Joint Committee established by the mayor, consisting of members of the Citizens' Committee, two aldermen, and certain labor officials, tried its hand. Then the services of representative officers of the railway brother-

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

hoods were accepted in the same capacity, with no better result.<sup>26</sup> Meanwhile the strike was spreading sympathetically far beyond Winnipeg. In spite of threats by the government to put it down by drastic action, such as deporting or interning its leaders, the struggle was becoming country-wide, and the workers began to agitate for a Dominion strike committee. Many cities, including Brandon, Calgary, Edmonton, Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon, and Vancouver became directly involved, while strikes as far off as Toronto and Amherst, Nova Scotia (these last being characterized in the *Labor Gazette* as "sympathetic to strikers in the metal trades") were doubtless traceable to the same source. Whatever may have been the cause—whether working conditions or spread of the strike idea—the number of industrial stoppages for the Dominion during May and June was abnormal for Canadian history, the number of days lost in the latter month reaching almost a million and a half.

If all striking were exclusively a question of comparative industrial strength the Winnipeg struggle might well be pointed to as a proof of the excellence of the methods and scheme of organization for which the O.B.U. has stood. Left alone to do battle with the employers, labor might well have continued its stranglehold to the point of forcing almost any concessions. But now the government took a step that was to carry the matter outside the realm of ordinary labor activity and control. On June 17 ten men, for the most part conspicuous strike leaders, were arrested at Winnipeg and a quantity of labor literature and documents seized. It was announced that, under the terms of recent amendments to the Immigration Act, passed apparently for this purpose, some of the prisoners were to suffer immediate deportation without being allowed a regular trial; but in deference to the state of the public mind this was not carried out. On June 21 a riot occurred resulting from a silent parade held in defiance of

<sup>26</sup> *Labor Gazette*, XIX, 789 ff.

the Mayor's proclamation forbidding this form of demonstration. One fatality resulted, thirty were taken to the hospital, and over one hundred were arrested. On July 1 a Dominion-wide search for labor literature was made for the purpose of collecting incriminating evidence to support the charges of revolution against the strike leaders.<sup>27</sup> On June 26, following a statement made by the metal trades employers of their acceptance of collective bargaining, the term being defined to the satisfaction of the Minister of Labor, the international officers of the railway brotherhoods, and the officers of certain railway companies, the strike was declared at an end.<sup>28</sup> Apart from the incident of June 21, the whole strike period was a remarkable exhibition of order and control.

The unconditional calling off of the strike by the workers was accompanied by an appeal for a royal commission with wide powers of inquiry to investigate the whole matter with respect to its causes. This was promised by the provincial government. Nevertheless the terms with which the struggle ceased were not regarded as satisfactory to labor; and the decisions of Judge Metcalfe at the trial of the leaders, which not only condemned five men to prison but affected quite adversely the legal limits of the strike weapon, resulted in making the whole outcome less pleasing still. For the present the state seems to have placed its organized strength directly across the path of those who sought to march forward by way of paralyzing industry through use of the general strike. The O.B.U. is still with us with its program and its organization dedicated to this line of advance, but nothing comparable to the effort of 1919 has since been attempted.

Some indication of what had taken place within the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council and what forces were in control during the strike is to be inferred from a letter from Tom Moore, president of the Canada Trades Congress, to the secretary of the

<sup>27</sup> W. S. Ryder, "Canada's Industrial Crisis of 1919," p. 38.

<sup>28</sup> For a statement of the metal trades' offer, see *Labor Gazette*, Vol. XIX.

former body, dated June 24. The letter, which was in reply to requests for assistance to procure the release of the arrested leaders and to take action to secure the continued existence of the Winnipeg Council, calls attention to the attitude of the latter during these two months with respect to the established movement in Canada, its leaders, and its policies. In the first place the Winnipeg Council had refused to grant President Moore a meeting of trade-unionists during his visit to the city early in May; and the leaders both of the Canadian Socialist Party in Winnipeg and of the Manitoba section of the O.B.U. (acting apparently as spokesmen for the council) had denied him information on the strike situation. Further, the letter charges the council with "repudiation of the control of international executives to grant or withhold sanction for a strike to their Winnipeg local unions, and slurring attacks and repudiation of the Trades Congress and its executives." It alleges that these actions

very plainly pointed to the fact that Winnipeg was determined upon its own line of action, which harmonized strongly with the policies laid down in the propaganda of the O.B.U., and by the usurpation of the power of international union executives by the Winnipeg Trades Council, in the calling of the strike, made it very plain that Winnipeg was determined to demonstrate the efficiency of massed action, sympathetic strikes, and economic dictatorship as superior, in achieving results, to the policies of the international trade unions, the Trades and Labor Congress, and the American Federation of Labor.

As a prerequisite to action by the congress to bring assistance to the settlement of the strike on its industrial side the letter called for (1) renewed allegiance to the Trades and Labor Congress and its principles, (2) advice to the locals that they submit to their international executives according to their constitutions, (3) pledges promising observance of the inviolability of agreements between workers and employers, (4) restoration to the local unions of full autonomy to decide their own action according to the laws laid down in their respective constitutions, and

finally (5) "that they repudiate any connection with the O.B.U. and its policies of massed action."<sup>29</sup>

On the other hand, advocates of the O.B.U. have vigorously disclaimed any connection between the strike and their propaganda.

#### V. THE LATER HISTORY OF THE ONE BIG UNION

In spite of its unkindly reception at the hands of the law, and notwithstanding opposition from other bodies of organized labor, the progress of the new movement was rapid during the year 1919. The Vancouver Trades and Labor Council became identified with it early in July, severing its connection with the Trades and Labor Congress and the American Federation of Labor. Following the lead of the Vancouver unions, the metalliferous miners of British Columbia, heretofore affiliated with the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, held a meeting in the town of Nelson and formed a mining department under the name of District No. 1 of the Metalliferous Miners of the O.B.U. The organized coal miners of Alberta and eastern British Columbia who had been members of District 18 of the United Mine Workers of America also forsook the international body and became a part of the O.B.U.<sup>30</sup> At Victoria little headway was made against the established movement, but at Prince Rupert the unions of fish-packers, teamsters, metal trades, and lumber workers, as well as the Trades and Labor Council, turned to the O.B.U. At Edmonton branches of the carpenters, United Mine Workers, and of the International Association of Machinists joined the new movement, although this action involved their expulsion from the local trades council. In Winnipeg a vote taken by the Trades and Labor Council, and reported July 15,

<sup>29</sup> *Proceedings of the Thirty-fifth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, pp. 43-45.

<sup>30</sup> *Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 29.

went 8,841-705 in favor of the O.B.U.<sup>31</sup> Following this disclosure of the will of the rank and file, the council adopted the constitution of the O.B.U. and requested all unions affiliated with the Trades and Labor Congress and the internationals to withdraw and affiliate with the new organization.<sup>32</sup>

While such success was attending efforts in the western provinces, the East had not been forgotten. J. R. Knight, of the central executive, after doing some work in Alberta, invaded Ontario in the autumn. Here he seems to have been well received for a time, but soon the hostility of the older labor movement, and especially of the eastern labor press, brought the inevitable reaction. At Toronto he was led to entertain hope by the "progressives" in the trades council during a split in the ranks, but was soon to be disillusioned when this element turned its attention to the political field to form a labor party to act in conjunction with the United Farmers of Ontario. Nevertheless he did succeed in organizing a couple of units among the miscellaneous workers and the carpenters and in forming a central council for the carrying on of propaganda. In Montreal, where a unit had already been formed earlier but had died out, he organized a new unit of the general workers. He also reported great possibilities among the shopmen of the Canadian National Railways, "a large percentage of whom were already silent members of the O.B.U.," and he saw some hopes in the needle trades. But for the province of Quebec he said the great need was for some literature in the French language and for full-time organizers. In addition to units in the two main cities he succeeded in establishing units at Hamilton, Kitchener, Carleton Place, and Windsor; he also reported a splendid prospect of a clean sweep against the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers in the Cobalt mining country. Notwithstanding his failure to make much im-

<sup>31</sup> This ballot seems to report returns from only fifty-one branch unions out of a total of ninety-one.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

pression on vital trades at strategic points, he came back to the convention impressed with the necessity of carrying the battle into the East by a more vigorous propaganda if the movement was to be a real success in Canada.<sup>38</sup> His attitude was that the East was backward in labor mentality, a condition that could only be remedied by educational propaganda.

But while this expansion was taking place the O.B.U. was not without its worries and its opposition. For one thing, their leaders were seriously handicapped. Russell, chairman of the Manitoba Provincial Committee, was among those arrested at Winnipeg in June, as was also Johns, of the central executive. Pritchard was held by the police at Calgary a few days later on his return to Vancouver from Winnipeg. Although these men were released on bail pending trial, much of their energy as well as that of other members was taken with addressing meetings and putting out literature in appeal for funds for legal defense against the vigorous crown prosecution. Kavanagh, somewhat later, was sent to England on what proved to be a bootless errand, the plan being to interest the forces of labor there in assisting with the defense of their brothers in Canada and in upholding the principles for which they had stood. In spite of all efforts the three men, along with five others, were convicted on charges of "seditious conspiracy," joined in some cases with that of "common nuisance," and condemned to serve terms varying from nine months to two years in the penitentiary. Their active services were thus lost to the O.B.U., although their popularity, and perhaps their usefulness to the organization, was not reduced to the extent expected. The central committee, in order to maintain a quorum in the face of absences due to different causes, added two new members in the persons of P. M. Christophers, representing the coal miners, and E. Winch, representing the lumber workers.

<sup>38</sup> Report to semiannual convention at Winnipeg, January, 1920.

Meanwhile the international unions and the Canada Trades Congress were not submitting without a battle to the outspoken attack on their policies and the stealing away of their membership. President Moore of the Congress appointed R. A. Rigg, of Winnipeg, to act as his deputy and to do what he could to re-establish the international movement in Western Canada, and the American Federation of Labor co-operated by appointing Messrs. Varley and Farmilo as general organizers for the territory.<sup>34</sup> In addition, some of the internationals became busy with circularizing their local branches, and certain individuals who had taken part in the Western Conference now came out in open opposition.

In those cases where it came to an open conflict between the new and one of the older organizations, the employers tended to throw in their weight against the O.B.U. This happened in connection with the trouble in District 18 of the United Mine Workers. The miners who had gone out on a strike against a reduction of wages on May 24 deserted the international for the O.B.U. The U.M.W. head office forthwith revoked the charter of the district and sent in a commission to clear up the confusion. The latter was able in August to bring back some of the branches into the fold, but failed to eliminate the enemy. On December 1 the dissentients formed an organization under the name of District No. 1, Mining Department of the O.B.U., so that there were two contending bodies of miners in this area. In the course of negotiations between the operators and the strikers during the summer the former demanded as a prerequisite to any reinstatement of strikers that the worker's officers must be vouched for by the international executive and that some assurance must be given that the terms of agreements would be fulfilled.<sup>35</sup>

In several cities where the trades and labor councils deserted

<sup>34</sup> *Report of Thirty-fifth Annual Convention, Trades and Labor Congress*, p. 45.

<sup>35</sup> *Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 32.

the old affiliation to take up with the new, the representatives of the Trades and Labor Congress were able to save the internationals from complete eclipse and to keep a nucleus on the spot in expectation of a better day. In Winnipeg, when the council transferred to the O.B.U., Mr. Rigg, on behalf of the Trades Congress, forestalled the sending of the charter and seal out of the city by taking possession of them, and called a special meeting. "At this meeting a press committee was appointed with full powers to enforce the authority of the council in respect to control of the *Western Labour News*," organ of the council. The Secretary and President of the old trades council refusing to hand over the property, the O.B.U. was deprived at the outset of both news organ and material effects. It formed the Winnipeg Central Labor Council on August 5 as an opposition body, and began the publication of the *O.B.U. Bulletin*. Soon after this its officers were compelled to vacate their premises in the Labor Temple, where they had found accommodation, and seek new quarters. In Vancouver Mr. Farmilo, acting under instructions from the A. F. of L., secured the old charter issued by the Trades Congress and set up a new council under it in competition. In this case, however, the property and funds were not recovered nor the interest in the *British Columbia Federationist*, the organ of the British Columbia Federation of Labor.<sup>86</sup> By similar action Prince Rupert also was left in the later part in 1919, with two competing trades councils.

At the close of the year 1919 the O.B.U. reported a total membership of 41,150, organized into 101 local units, with 8 central labor councils and 2 district boards. Of the latter the coal miner's board consisted of 17 branches distributed in both western coal fields, while that of the metal miners included 10 local units. As for the O.B.U. following in other industries at this time, we find it chiefly in three groups, viz., railway, lumber,

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

and general workers, with the textile trades probably coming fourth.

At the convention of January, 1920, the secretary reported a membership of nearly 50,000, although the per capita tax receipts for 1919 showed only the small figure of \$5,200, indicating that the payment of dues (10 cents per month) must have been largely optional. The expenditures indicated, as might be expected, an active campaign through organizers and literary propaganda, the latter term covering, in addition to pamphlets, etc., several labor papers that were started in various places and run at a loss, in some cases being discontinued when their immediate purpose had been served.

The convention continued Pritchard as chairman of the executive, although he was in confinement. It passed resolutions looking to the founding of a national paper and to the use of an O.B.U. label for the benefit of its textile workers; it instructed the new executive to build up a fund for the support of wives and dependents of members who were serving sentence "for their activities in organizing or otherwise promoting the principles or interests of the organization"; on the other hand, while declaring itself "in full accord with the spirit" of the request, it refused to entertain a resolution submitted by the "Winnipeg Defense Committee" calling upon "all the workers from the Atlantic to the Pacific to take a vote to go on strike to obtain the release of these brothers [in prison] . . . and that the workers in the British Isles be asked to co-operate."<sup>87</sup>

During the year 1920 the work of organization went on, two regular organizers being maintained steadily in the field, one in the East and one in the West. The metal mining district of northern Ontario, mentioned by Knight in his report to the January convention as likely territory, was captured for the O.B.U. following a strike poorly sustained by the weak miners' and

<sup>87</sup> Report of the convention in January, 1920.

smelters' international; additions were made among the coal miners of Vancouver Island; and outside of Canada considerable attention was paid to appeals for organizing assistance at various points in the United States. Nevertheless the outstanding features of the year were the effective stiffening of the forces of opposition, the defection of one (the lumber workers) of the four main industries in its entirety, and a general loss in membership in Canada. Even Vancouver, the birthplace of the organization, failed to pay up its dues, and in September the headquarters was removed to Winnipeg.

Always ready to carry the battle into the enemy's territory, the O.B.U. prepared a publication entitled the *Montreal Shopman* and distributed 15,000 copies of it in Montreal while the American Federation of Labor was sitting there in convention. The action was poorly calculated to lull the sleeping giant, and measures already taken by the internationals to put a quietus on the youthful upstart appear to have been redoubled. The Building Trades Department took action to support the fighting policies already laid down by the Canada Trades Congress at its convention in May; and the Brotherhood of Maintenance-of-Way Employees, it was admitted, sent a check of \$50,000 to Secretary Draper of the Congress, for special organizing purposes—to mention only two items. Some of the internationals, finding members holding at the same time O.B.U. cards, compelled them to destroy these in front of the membership at the meeting.<sup>88</sup>

Moreover, the machinery of the law was to be called upon once more, and this time again to the injury of the new movement. A legal decision in Winnipeg found against the O.B.U. in the matter of property held by one of its units and originally belonging to a lodge of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen, order-

<sup>88</sup> Respecting this matter of exclusiveness, the O.B.U. on its part passed a resolution at the convention in January, 1920, "that no member be eligible for any elective office in the O.B.U. who is carrying a membership card in any international union."

ing the property to be turned over to members who had remained loyal to the parent organization. The judgment involved less than \$900, but it was a precedent. The O.B.U. itself was continually hampered by remarks in the daily press implying or contending outright that it was an illegal organization.

Over a considerable period a bitter conflict was waged between the O.B.U. and the United Mine Workers of America. It has been noted that the former, in the summer of 1919, formed a district board with jurisdiction covering the British Columbia and Alberta coal areas to carry on its battle for the possession of the field. With the passage of time the struggle lost none of its bitterness, the O.B.U. being determined to force its enemy to withdraw from Canada; while the U.M.W. did not hesitate to use both the operators and the machinery of the law to defeat the interloper. Preferring the lesser of two evils, and hoping to steady conditions, the employers entered into a contract with the U.M.W., conceding wage increases and providing that all men around the mines eligible to membership in the U.M.W. should join that body and agree to sign the check-off for dues, etc. Naturally the O.B.U. forthwith declared war on the check-off system. A strike of the O.B.U. hands was threatened, but, failing of support among the members, was replaced by an attempt to force some of the operators to open their mines to O.B.U. followers by charging them with a lockout contrary to the terms of the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act. The attempt, however, failed, owing, it was claimed, to the action of the government operating by virtue of its war-time control of fuel. In July, 1920, a new agreement between the operators and the U.M.W. gave an increase of 13 per cent in wages. In September a special convention of the O.B.U. district lodge of miners met at Calgary and called a strike for October 1. The order, while not fully obeyed, brought a serious interference with operations in some localities during the three weeks of its duration. The intimidation tactics carried on in connection with the

strike and the attempts to get U.M.W. members to violate their working agreement was met by an injunction against certain O.B.U. officials restraining them from interfering with employees of the companies desiring to work, and also by a circular letter issued by the U.M.W. officials of the district pointing out the futility of the strike and the inability of the O.B.U. to give either financial or moral support to the strikers.

Considered as a whole, while it involved the U.M.W. in a great bill of expense, the long clash was a defeat for the O.B.U. One of its leading effects was probably the betterment of wage conditions to the members of the U.M.W.; on October 25 wages were increased for the third time in the year, being advanced \$2.50 per day over and above the wages in effect on October 31, 1919. It was plain that throughout the struggle the operators favored the U.M.W. and sought to maintain the system of trade agreements. The O.B.U. charged that not only the operators but the government, from the date of the inception of the new movement, had met the coal miners with bitter opposition; that the object of a certain order issued by the Fuel Controller was nothing other than the compelling of all miners to become members of the U.M.W.<sup>39</sup> In spite of statements by President Lewis to the effect that the O.B.U. had been crushed in the coal fields and that Canadian miners were 100 per cent loyal to his organization, events in 1924 in both Alberta and Nova Scotia point to deep-lying dissatisfaction and to influences from somewhere suggesting to the student that old scores are still to be settled.<sup>40</sup>

It is interesting to note that strikes by the O.B.U. exclusively dedicated to trade purposes against employers, in 1919 and 1920, as later, were of minor importance. The battles were for

<sup>39</sup> *Report of the G.E.B. to the Port Arthur Convention.*

<sup>40</sup> An incident in connection with operations in the coal area was the kidnapping and deportation into the United States of Mr. Christophers, the regular O.B.U. organizer for the western provinces and miners' representative on the central executive. Government attempts to locate the perpetrators of this act were unsuccessful.

the most part for jurisdictional supremacy, and soon developed a three-cornered aspect.

The second significant event of the year (1920) was the loss of the lumber workers. Trouble seems to have arisen in the first instance over the seating of delegates at the Port Arthur convention, only seven of the ten representatives of the lumber workers' union being acceptable to the credentials committee. Thereupon the whole delegation, with one exception, withdrew from the hall. At bottom the difficulty centered in a difference of opinion as to what was to be the basic principle of organization for the O.B.U. The lumber workers opposed the geographical or district form, whereby all units within a geographical area are linked together to form a district board without connection with other units of the same industry in other districts except through the general executive of the O.B.U. They maintained that, while this linking up of all units of all industries is necessary, "it is also absolutely essential that all units of each particular industry should be connected throughout the length and breadth of the industry." They refused to abolish their central headquarters, a step which a full acceptance of the O.B.U. constitution would have involved.<sup>41</sup> Subsequent to the convention, the Lumber Workers' Industrial Union, after taking a referendum vote, severed its connection with the O.B.U. According to a statement of C. E. Berg, secretary of the Edmonton Branch of the L.W.I.U., it had been by far the heaviest contributor to the O.B.U. cause, and doubtless its desertion at this time was a hard blow to the latter.<sup>42</sup>

Efforts were made during 1921 to come to terms with the L.W.I.U. by negotiations carried on at the headquarters of the latter at Vancouver. The approaches of the O.B.U. executive, it

<sup>41</sup> *Report of the G.E.B. to the Port Arthur Convention.*

<sup>42</sup> *Eleventh Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 41. In spite of the argument of the L.W.I.U. favoring organization by industry, untrammelled by geographical divisions, the lumber workers' units in Ontario have remained with the O.B.U. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 45.

was reported, were favorably received, but at the time the L.W. I.U. was anticipating taking part in a conference of progressive labor bodies to be called at Chicago by the I.W.W., and, until that meeting had taken place, it refused to take action.<sup>43</sup> Subsequently (1923) the British Columbia branches of the lumber workers' union became identified with the I.W.W., forming themselves into a district union of the American organization.

The record of the O.B.U. in later years has been largely a story of slowing down due to a weakened membership and to a lack of funds. With its following (outside of Winnipeg) largely among general workers and metal miners and other outlying groups, its pace has doubtless been affected more than that of most labor organizations by depressed industrial conditions. Added to this is the fact that Western Canada, its main field of operations, has felt the depression much more keenly than has the East. Messrs. Pritchard, Russell, and Johns, who took the road almost immediately upon gaining their freedom in 1921, in the hope of stemming the tide of disintegration, reported, after extensive touring of the territory, that organization in the then present condition of unemployment was hopeless; and in the convention held at Winnipeg in September, 1921, the secretary pointed out, in accounting for the small financial receipts for the year, that large numbers of members who were really in good standing had been unable to keep up their dues.<sup>44</sup> The executive board on the same occasion was compelled to admit that the O.B.U. was "practically defunct in the coal fields." It reported that "the miners were strong for the O.B.U., but that the Government Coal Control Board were enforcing the compulsory check-off, thus forcing the miners unwillingly to become a part

<sup>43</sup> *Report of the G.E.B. to the Port Arthur Convention*, p. 45.

<sup>44</sup> It is to be noted in this connection that a clause of the constitution provides for exemption of members from payment of dues when such a course seems justifiable to the local unit officers. Regular exemption receipts are issued by the local secretaries to such members.

of the U.M.W.A.”<sup>45</sup> As a matter of fact the charter of District 18 of the U.M.W. was returned from headquarters and autonomy restored to the district in August in place of the “commission” government which had functioned since the revocation of the charter in 1919. By the end of 1921 Messrs. Johns, Midgley, Knight, and Christophers, of the old guard, had all resigned from active participation in the O.B.U.

Statistics of membership in recent years are not readily available owing to the failure of the officers to make returns to the Department of Labor. The latter estimated the membership at the end of 1920, following the defection of the Lumber Workers, to be as low as 5,000, with the local units numbering 50. At the close of 1921 it was put at 5,300, with 4 central labor councils and 34 locals. Standing in apparent conflict with these estimates, however, is the fact that sixteen delegates were present at the September convention of the latter year, which, according to the constitution, would signify a membership of upward of 16,000.<sup>46</sup> The membership in 1923, according to the General Secretary, was in the neighborhood of 15,000. As for geographical distribution, the center of the movement is still in Winnipeg, where the railway workers, street-railway operatives, and general workers have stood firm and whence issues the official organ.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *Report of the G.E.B. to the Port Arthur Convention*, p. 45.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Constitution, clause 23, for basis of representation.

<sup>47</sup> Since the above was written a report to the Department of Labor by the general secretary supplied the information that at the close of 1925 the O.B.U. had fifty-six units under charter, three of which were located in American cities, the total membership being 17,856. During the year seven units were established: four in Nova Scotia, chiefly among the Pictou miners, and one each in New Brunswick, Quebec, and Manitoba. Central labor councils are reported at Winnipeg, Moose Jaw, and Thunder Bay (see *Fifteenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 51). The O.B.U. had little respect for national boundaries, and its battle against the international unions was in no sense engendered by the fact of their foreign membership. During its first year organizers Knight and Kavanagh were sent across the border, the one to Montana and the other to California. The California mission seems to have yielded little fruit at the time,

One of the most interesting features in O.B.U. history, and during the years 1922-23 probably the outstanding object of its propaganda, has been its antagonism toward the Trade Union Educational League and its counterpart in the Dominion, the "Workers' Party of Canada." On the occasion of the first convention of the latter body held at Toronto in February, 1922, several O.B.U. members were present as representatives of various western cities, R. B. Russell being the official delegate from the organization. The heated discussion that took place brought into the open the stubborn lines of difference between the two revolutionary bodies. The majority of the delegates, it would appear, came to the meeting already converted to the principles of Fosterism, and a resolution was brought in practically indorsing the policy that the radicals should operate by getting into the craft unions for the purpose of fusing and amalgamating them into industrial unions, and then to have these affiliate with the Red International Labor Union at Moscow. To this end clause 2 of the resolution read:

. . . . Not only must the policy pursued by some groups in the past of seeking to revolutionize the labor movement by splitting away to form new ideal unions be completely abandoned; not only must dual unionism be vig-

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owing to confusion with the I.W.W., but the report of the convention of January, 1920, lists among the accredited delegates a metal miner from Butte, Montana. Efforts were also made to establish branches in Chicago, and in the spring of 1920 a lodge of sheet-metal workers was converted from the international faith and went over to the O.B.U. Later we read of Mr. Knight paying a visit to New York. It was soon announced, however, that owing to lack of funds the Canadian organization could not continue to carry the responsibility of organizing beyond Canada, and that the American membership would have to make that their own affair. At a convention held at Chicago in April, 1920, a general executive board for the United States was elected and the membership south of the line turned over to it. At this time there were O.B.U. units at Milwaukee, Chicago, Neihart, Butte, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Seattle, and Toledo (see *Tenth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada*, p. 30). In 1922 the division claimed a membership of 30,000, according to Savage, with branches at Lawrence, Massachusetts, Altoona, Pennsylvania, and in some thirty-eight western cities (cf. Savage, *Industrial Unionism*, p. 182).

orously combated; but positively all tendencies to consolidate the trade unions by amalgamating the related crafts on the basis of one union for each industry must be fostered within the existing trades.<sup>48</sup>

While looking to the same ultimate goal, viz., the overthrow of capitalism and the capitalist class, the entire method of procedure is opposed to that of the O.B.U. The wording, in effect, says the whole struggle put up by the latter against the internationals is a mistake, and that its organization is poorly conceived. Delegate Russell, supported by a few others, proceeded to point out the weakness of the new plan, contending that the workers in the West would refuse to go back to the old craft organizations; that the A. F. of L. today, more than ever, was pursuing policies calculated to destroy the "class concept" in the minds of the workers and pandering to a caste psychology; that one union for a whole industry, regardless of geographical lines, was unfitted to many industries; and finally he declared there were two paths for the convention to take: one was to indorse the O.B.U.; the other was to give their whole-hearted support to the A. F. of L. instead of advising the workers to crawl in by the "back door" to destroy it.<sup>49</sup> Propaganda, both in the columns of the *Bulletin* and in separate pamphlets, has been operated by the O.B.U. arguing the case against the newer radical methods. A recent publication bearing the title *The Futility of Fosterism* contends that in a destructive way these policies have done great injury in Canada. Entering the country almost at the same time as the formation of the O.B.U., they have divided the progressives in the ranks of labor as to what type of organization they should choose, and have thus defeated the one attempt to form a true radical movement. In an editorial of January 3, 1924, the *O.B.U. Bulletin* speaking editorially of this "ghastly failure" of

<sup>48</sup> Report of R. B. Russell, of convention of Workers' Party of Canada, February, 1922.

<sup>49</sup> Some explain the refusal of the O.B.U., in face of criticism, to affiliate with the Red International as due to this "back to the union" policy of the latter.

"linking up the emancipation with the most reactionary labor leaders," says: "This attitude on the part of the Workers' Party has caused hundreds of workers to climb on to the fence disgusted, announcing that the game is not worth while, and that they intend to remain unorganized."

The advocates of the Workers' Party, on the other hand, have charged the O.B.U. with having become reactionary, a mere appendage of the Socialist Party of Canada, and out of line with the authorities at Moscow. Doubtless the O.B.U. has been considerably weakened by the subtle offer of an easier road to the goal of proletarian conquest.

Passing by its relations with other bodies, both in Canada and beyond, and leaving out of consideration the early ebullitions of certain leaders against constituted government, its repudiation of the political weapon, etc., we may well pause to estimate what is for us the really important matter, viz., the O.B.U. as a form of labor organization. But here again we cannot proceed far to any purpose without recalling its philosophy and relating the mechanism to the principles it was intended to serve. The O.B.U. was built upon the idea of a social order composed of two elements, workers and non-workers, between which runs a clear line of cleavage—two classes with interests opposed and mutually exclusive. Speaking from the standpoint of logical adaptation of tools to viewpoint, if we adopt the class-struggle philosophy as the phrase is interpreted by labor radicals, the general strike as a means to class victory is a natural sequitor, inasmuch as different employers have no separate rights to individual treatment in their relations with the workers. They are simply different sensitive points in a common organism which the workers must at all costs destroy. On the other hand, if we do not eliminate all other lines in deference to this concept of class; if we see individual employers as separate entities with differing degrees of guilt and deserts, and differing rights to fair

treatment by their workers; if, moreover, we admit the presence of a third class in society and are inclined to stress its rights; then the general strike, as contemplated by the O.B.U., blocking entirely the industrial and commercial life in a chosen area to force a point against certain employers, is a logical, as well as an ethical, error. Possibly between the two viewpoints, and incorporating some of the truth of each, there are others, which, while permitting the use of explosive weapons, would set definite limits and rules for their operation. The followers of the O.B.U. have had no doubts about their point of view; they have ever chosen the first of those just outlined and, building from there, have developed a system that is logical and whose weapons are effective up to the point where their employment meets with the condemnation of public opinion and brings down upon those who wield them the heavy hand of the law.

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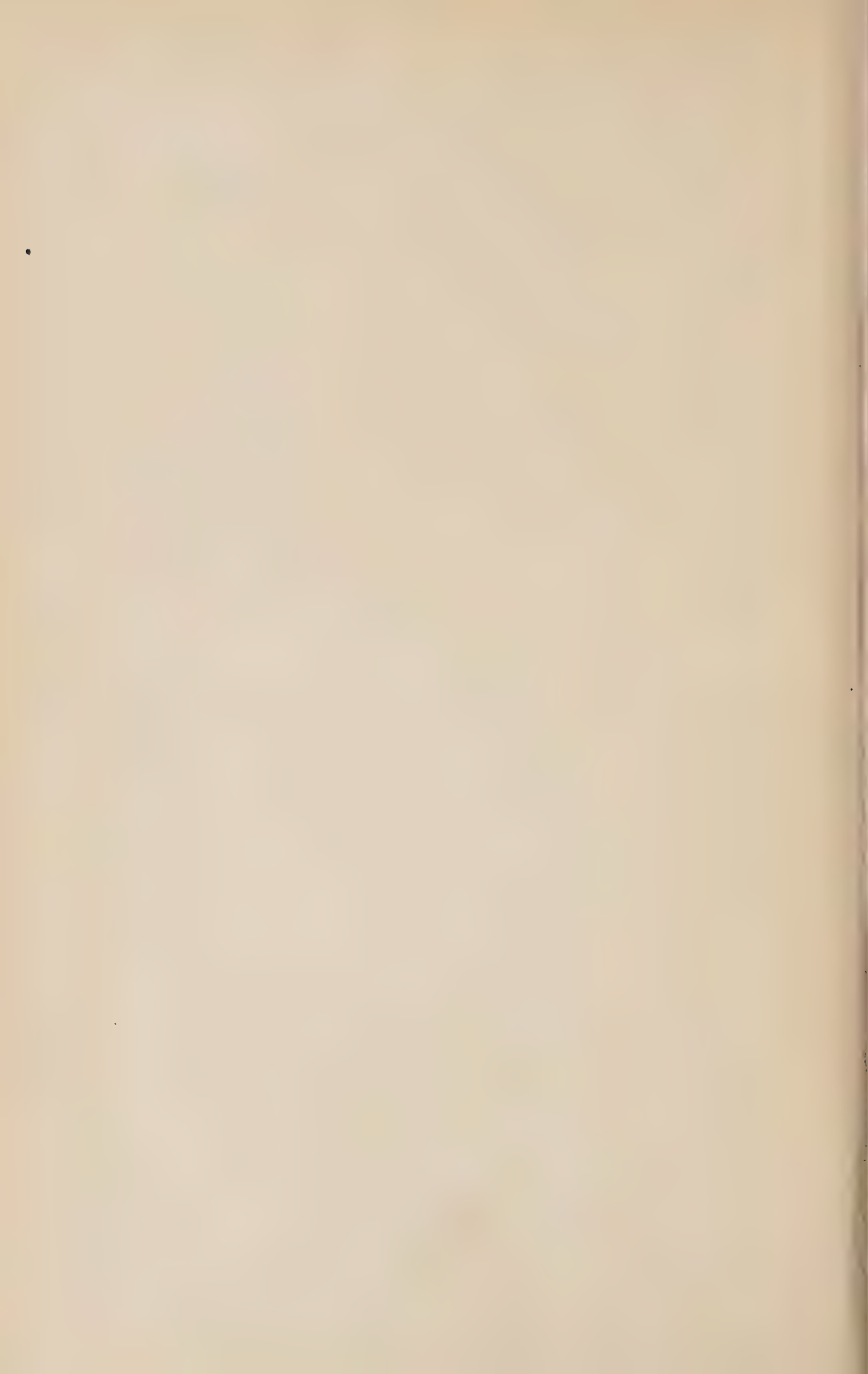
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